



October 19, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

SUBJECT: Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program: Interstate 5 Golden State Chokepoint Relief Program - SUPPORT

Dear Secretary Chao,

We are writing on behalf of the Valley Industry & Commerce Association (VICA), one of the most influential business advocacy organizations in Southern California, representing more than 400 businesses in the San Fernando Valley and throughout Los Angeles County. VICA strongly supports the grant application submitted by the County of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the California Department of Transportation for fiscal years 2017 and 2018 INFRA funding to advance the I-5 Golden State Chokepoint Relief Program.

The program proposed for INFRA grant funding offers a comprehensive approach to fixing congestion, improving safety, and providing more route choices along a critical 18-mile stretch of I-5 in north Los Angeles County. It focuses on a chokepoint in the rapidly-growing Santa Clarita Valley where I-5 becomes the sole major north-south link between the Central Valley and the Los Angeles Basin. The lack of alternative routes along this chokepoint, combined with challenging terrain, makes the entire West Coast vulnerable to paralyzing supply chain disruptions along the entirety of I-5, a vital international trade corridor stretching nearly 800 miles from Mexico to Canada.

We urge the USDOT to leverage over \$440 million in committed local investments and award discretionary INFRA funds. This grant will allow for construction of truck lanes and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes along the I-5 chokepoint and for widening of The Old Road, the key arterial highway paralleling I-5 that serves as the main critical bypass during freeway shutdowns.

This targeted program of improvements will add new roadway capacity for commuters and freight traffic where it is most needed, thereby relieving the chokepoint, enhancing safety and security, and supporting continued economic development both in the Santa Clarity Valley and the nation.

Sincerely,

Kevin Tamaki
VICA Chair

Stuart Waldman
VICA President