

January 10, 2012

California Transportation Commission
1120 n. Street, Room 221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SBCAG Commuter Rail Funding Request

Dear Commission Members:

The County of Santa Barbara supports the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' (SBCAG) request for \$7.5 million in Proposition 1B, or, as an alternative, new STIP inter-regional rail funding needed for capital improvements to begin commuter rail service between Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Commuter rail service is a key component to the implementation of "101 in Motion" – a multi-modal plan adopted by SBCAG to provide a long term solution to Highway 101 congestion in our region. The 30-year extension of Santa Barbara County's transportation sales tax (Measure A), approved by voters in 2008, allocates \$25 million for commuter and passenger rail service to provide an alternative to driving in the 101 corridor.

The Santa Barbara community has a demonstrable need for California Transportation Commission to fund this project as requested. Current Highway 101 congestion negatively impacts the environment, economy, public safety, and quality of life for the Santa Barbara community. As you know, the long-planned freeway widening projects in our area are now underway. During much of the construction period, which is expected to last over a decade, congestion will be exacerbated, as will the associated negative impacts on the Santa Barbara community. Commuter rail service between Ventura and Santa Barbara and other congestion relief projects and programs are crucial to alleviating the traffic congestion problem.

Once again, the County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors respectfully requests that the California Transportation Commission approve the \$7.5 million in funding SBCAG requested for commuter rail projects capital improvements. If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact me, or you may contact County Executive Officer, Chandra Wallar.

Sincerely,

Doreen Farr
Chair, Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara

Cc: First District Supervisor, Salud Carbajal
Second District Supervisor, Janet Wolf
Fourth District Supervisor, Joni Gray
Fifth District Supervisor, Steve Lavagnino
County Executive Officer, Chandra Wallar
Public Works Director, Scott McGolpin