

February 16, 2010

Mr. Jim Kemp  
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments  
260 North San Antonio Rd.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Re: Pacific Surfliner Schedule Revision

Dear Mr. Kemp:

The County of Santa Barbara strongly supports adjusting the current Pacific Surfliner schedule to serve peak-hour passengers between Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. Currently, Surfliner #799 arrives in Santa Barbara at 10:12AM and Surfliner #798 departs Santa Barbara at 4:31PM, which eliminates these trains as a viable option for most commuters traveling to work in Santa Barbara from the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and points further south. Adjusting the #799 arrival time in Santa Barbara to 7:30AM, and the #798 departure time, leaving Santa Barbara at 5:20PM, will meet the existing demand, appeal to more passengers and significantly boost ridership on these trains.

Adjustments to the Pacific Surfliner service north of Los Angeles are necessary to make rail service an attractive alternative to travel on Highway 101, which is frequently heavily congested. Highway 101 is the only vehicular connection between Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, and four major highway construction projects over the next fifteen years will heavily impact the flow of traffic on this vital link between the two regions. Providing an alternative to this corridor is crucial to maintaining and enhancing the economic vitality of our region. Santa Barbara County is one of the largest employers in the region, and hundreds of our employees commute from Ventura County. We have heard from our employees, and we are certain that there is a very high demand for a rail alternative to driving.

With the State facing severe financial constraints, improving the efficiency and productivity of State-supported train service is vital. Modifying both the #799 and #798 train schedules to better serve regional travelers will significantly increase ridership and fare revenue, as well as decrease the amount of commuter traffic on Highway 101. The County of Santa Barbara strongly encourages Caltrans Division of Rail to adjust the Pacific Surfliner schedule as noted above,

which will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire Pacific Surfliner and State Highway Transportation System.

Sincerely,

Supervisor Janet Wolf, Chair  
Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Barbara

Cc: Salud Carbajal, First District Supervisor  
Doreen Farr, Third District Supervisor  
Joni Gray, Fourth District Supervisor  
Joe Centeno, Fifth District Supervisor  
Michael Brown, Chief Executive Officer  
Scott McGolpin, Public Works Department, Director  
Dacé Morgan, Deputy Director – Transportation