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David S. Kim
Secretary

May 26, 2021

Mr. Jose Rodriguez
Chair, Madera County Transportation Commission
2001 Howard Road, Suite 201
Madera, California 93637

Dear Chair Rodriguez:

I am writing in response to your letter dated May 12, 2021 regarding a \$10 million request for Congressionally Directed Surface Transportation Project Funding for the *State Route 99 (SR 99) Operational Improvement Project* in Madera County. This project will widen southbound SR 99 from two to three lanes in Madera County from 1.5 miles north of the Fresno-Madera County line to north of Avenue 8. The project will also construct a 12-foot lane and 10-foot shoulder in the median, drainage improvements, drainage basins and median barrier.

Specifically, your letter expressed disappointment with the California State Transportation Agency's (CalSTA) decision to refrain from writing a letter supporting Congressionally directed funding for this project. I would like to clarify CalSTA's role in coordinating with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on letters supporting Congressionally directed funding requests, particularly with respect to this project.

In late March, CalSTA shared with stakeholders and partners a set of guiding principles for projects that CalSTA and Caltrans would support for Congressionally directed surface transportation project funding. Requests for support letters were submitted to and evaluated by Caltrans in accordance with the guiding principles.

It is my understanding that in late March, Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) approached Caltrans to request a letter of support for \$121.5 million in Congressionally directed funding for the *SR 99 Madera South – Safety and Gap Closure Project*. Based on my knowledge of the Congressional

earmarking process, a \$121.5 million request greatly exceeds what is widely viewed on Capitol Hill as a realistic level of earmarked funding, and in fact is tens of millions of dollars over and above the vast majority of transportation funding requests submitted for consideration by Congressional offices.

As a result, Caltrans did not provide a letter of support for the \$121.5 million *SR 99 Madera South – Safety and Gap Closure Project*. However, MCTC subsequently advanced the \$10 million *SR 99 Operational Improvement Project* for Congressional funding consideration. Consequently, Caltrans provided a letter of support for this project. In doing so, Caltrans noted the project will address freight system needs on a high-volume freight corridor and enhance connectivity and accessibility to the proposed Madera Amtrak Station near Avenue 12.

I hope this information provides clarification and addresses the concerns expressed in your letter. Please feel free to contact me or Giles Giovinazzi, Senior Advisor at Giles.Giovinazzi@calsta.ca.gov or 916-214-6144 if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

David S. Kim

DAVID S. KIM
Secretary

cc: Toks Omishakin, Director, Caltrans
Diana Gomez, District 6 Director, Caltrans
LeeAnn Eagar, Commissioner, CTC
Mitch Weiss, Executive Director, CTC
Jim Costa, Congressman, 16th District
Andreas Borgeas, State Senator, 8th District
Anna Caballero, State Senator, 12th District
Frank Bigelow, Assembly Member, 5th District
Patricia Taylor, Executive Director, MCTC