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May 20, 2020

Senator Beall
Senate Transportation Committee
State Capitol Building

Re: **SUPPORT** for SB 1291 (Beall) Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program: submissions.

Dear Senator Beall:

The Madera County Transportation Commission is pleased to support SB 1291, which would provide some much-needed flexibility to regional agencies that otherwise face developing the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) in the face of uncertainties related to federal changes under the SAFE Vehicles Rule (Part 2).

We support this because the bill is only temporarily suspending a more stringent state requirement during a period of great uncertainty. The underlying federal requirement remains in place. The federal law requires a new FSTIP every four years. California law requires a new FSTIP every two years.

Two factors are driving this need. First, there is a significant amount of uncertainty related to the implementation of the SAFE Vehicles Rule. Part 2 of the rule was just unveiled in March and will likely be effective sometime in June. The changes in fuel efficiencies create uncertainties related to modeling factors needed to make air conformity determinations. If conformity cannot be determined, billions in transportation projects—including rail and transit projects—will be at risk as soon as October of this year.

Second, the FSTIP process requires a tremendous amount of work and coordination with local jurisdictions to complete. In order to get the needed approvals by September, much of the advance work needs to be done in May, June, and July. This year, those timelines are particularly difficult. Like most agencies, we are having a difficult time completing all the things that need to get done while we shelter in place. Given the significant consequences, if an FSTIP is not completed by October 1, it would be prudent to suspend the state requirement this year.

Thank you for authoring this important bill. Please contact Patricia Taylor, Executive Director, Madera County Transportation Commission, at (559) 675-0721 or patricia@maderactc.org if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Max Rodriguez, Chair
Madera County Transportation Commission