



March 28, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8630
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
Chair, Senate Budget Sub #5
1021 O Street, Suite 7530
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Bloom
Chair, Assembly Budget Sub #3
1021 O Street, Suite 8130
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Funding to Close Gaps in State Route 99

Dear Chairs:

The undersigned legislators write to respectfully request \$465.5 million in the 2022-2023 State Budget to finish the expansion of State Route 99 (SR 99). This funding will allow the San Joaquin Valley to continue to move California's Agricultural production up and down the state, and continue to make it the lead agricultural producer in the nation. Ninety percent of freight that moves through the San Joaquin Valley moves by truck, and it does so, primarily on SR 99. This funding will support the movement of freight throughout CA, as 1.3 million trips are made on this road every day.

In 2005, Caltrans published the SR 99 Business Plan, which outlined a strategic approach to transform SR 99 into a safe and efficient trade corridor. The plan set forth Caltrans' long-term goals for the route and a corresponding list of projects to achieve those goals, in an effort to streamline funding decisions for corridor improvements. A key priority for this work was completing widening projects necessary for SR 99 to be a six-lane corridor. Where SR 99 changes from four lanes to six lanes and back to four lanes again bottlenecks create congestion and serious safety issues.

Today, the goal established in the Business Plan to widen SR 99 from four to six lanes from Kern County to San Joaquin County, remains unfinished. As a result, the corridor is needlessly congested and unsafe, hampering economic activity, negatively affecting the quality-of-life in the San Joaquin Valley, and adversely affecting air quality and the environment.

We the undersigned legislators are seeking State General Funding for the following projects, which, combined with other regional, state, and federal resources, will make significant progress toward the SR 99 Business Plan's goals and objectives:

Specifically, the allocation would include the following:

1. City of Tulare Rehabilitation, Widening, and Paige Avenue Interchange Improvements

\$150 million (\$25 million for right-of-way, \$125 million for construction) This project is located along SR 99, within the City of Tulare. It includes safety and goods movement upgrades to five miles of the mainline SR 99 corridor and reconstruction of a deficient overcrossing and interchange at Paige Avenue, to allow for multi-modal access between the east and west sides of the City.

2. Madera County Reconstruction and Widening

\$144.5 million (\$50 for environmental, right-of-way, and design; \$94.5 million for construction) This project is located along SR 99, within the County of Madera. The project will rehabilitate and widen a five-mile segment of SR 99 to support goods movement, motorist safety, and to reduce commuter delays.

3. Downtown Merced and Atwater

\$3 million for a preliminary feasibility study to determine portions for the project. There are gaps on SR 99 in Merced County that need to be closed to complete the corridor throughout the San Joaquin Valley. Funding will support the Merced and Atwater gap closure projects and would kick-start a preliminary, but comprehensive study of solutions, including feasibility of various options and alternatives.

4. Tulare Gap Closure

\$168 million (\$6 million for environmental; \$7 million for design; \$5 million for right-of-way, \$150 million for construction) This project would finish the SR 99 gaps in Tulare County. It would fill the gap between the Delano SR 99 project to the south and the SR 99 project within the City of Tulare. It would include a full environmental analysis, designing the project and acquiring the needed property for right-of-way to build these lanes. After these steps, the project would be ready to construct.

The San Joaquin Valley has demonstrated that they can meet the state's aggressive greenhouse gas emission (GHG) reduction goals, while finishing SR 99 through the development, adoption, and state approval of its SB 375 mandated Sustainable Communities Strategy.

A safe and efficient multimodal transportation system is the heart of a strong economy, and in the San Joaquin Valley, that backbone is SR 99. It is a critical corridor for moving our bountiful agricultural goods up and down the state on their way to feed people across the nation. It is a connector of people and jobs, of students and education, of workers and opportunity. SR 99 is a quality-of-life corridor for the San Joaquin Valley and beyond. While progress on SR 99 has been made, much work does remain. This is much needed funding for the San Joaquin Valley – to save lives, to support the economy and jobs, and to improve overall quality of life.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Marisol Ibarra in my office at Marisol.Ibarra@sen.ca.gov or via phone (916) 651-4014.

Sincerely,



Melissa Hurtado, Senator
Senate District 14



Devon Mathis, Assemblymember
Assembly District 26



Shannon Grove, Senator
Senate District 16



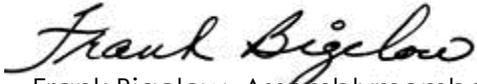
Rudy Salas, Assemblymember
Assembly District 32



Heath Flora, Assemblymember
Assembly District 12



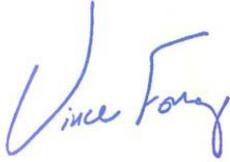
Andreas Borgeas, Senator
Senate District 8



Frank Bigelow, Assemblymember
Assembly District 5



Adam Gray, Assemblymember
Assembly District 21



Vince Fong, Assemblymember
Assembly District 34



Carlos Villapudua, Assemblymember
Assembly District 13