



The Honorable Adam Schiff
United States Senator
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senator
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jim Costa
United States Representative
2081 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Vince Fong
United States Representative
243 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Valadao
United States Representative
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom McClintock
United States Representative
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Josh Harder
United States Representative
209 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jay Obernolte
United States Representative
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Gray
United States Representative
1230 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 28, 2025

Dear Members of the Central Valley Congressional Delegation,

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council represents the eight metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) coordinating transportation planning for four million residents of the Central Valley, as well as the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) and San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA). We understand that authorizing committees are accepting policy priorities from lawmakers for consideration to inform the development of the next surface transportation reauthorization. As the Executive Directors of these regional planning agencies, we wanted to provide a review of our recommendations for your consideration as Congress begins its work in earnest drafting this legislation governing the administration of federal transportation programs and the distribution of resources.

We ask that a core goal of the reauthorization be to provide adequate and stable funding to ensure the long-term solvency of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). We understand that lawmakers are considering various revenue sources

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to strengthen the Fund. Our agencies respectfully request that you consider the potential disproportionate impact of models that utilize vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on rural users accessing healthcare services and employment and educational opportunities throughout the Valley during these discussions.

Next, we request that lawmakers increase prioritize distributing funding through key formula programs, and we encourage you to implement mandatory suballocations of these funds directly to MPOs to more swiftly deliver infrastructure projects supported by our communities. These include the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), and Metropolitan Planning Program (MPP). The MPP Program should be provided with adequate funding to support planning requirements that reflect both the evolving role of MPOs and our ability to fulfill federal mandates. We support legislative efforts intended to shift the share of federal dollars to these funding streams that are more predictable and accessible to our agencies than competitive programs.

The Central Valley would benefit from increased funding to strengthen local roads subject to heavy-duty trucks and equipment supporting agricultural production and goods movement. We applaud Congressman Valadao, Congressman Costa, and Congressman Fong for introducing bipartisan legislation, the *Farm-to-Market Road Improvement Act*, to address the strain on local roads, and we ask lawmakers to consider the inclusion of that legislation in the reauthorization. The measure would provide for a ten percent set-aside within the Rural Surface Transportation (Rural) Grant Program to support improvements to roads in counties with an annual gross agricultural production value of at least \$1 billion and agricultural production of at least \$500,000 per square mile, adjusted annually for inflation.

The reauthorization should provide more robust resources for federal programs that support other critical infrastructure needs, modernizing our regional transportation system and improving air quality. We urge lawmakers to increase funding for bridge programs that are heavily oversubscribed, such as the Bridge Formula Program (BFP) and competitive Bridge Investment Program (BIP). We ask that the reauthorization preserve funding for programs designed to address air quality challenges in the region through the purchase of more efficient vehicles and innovative equipment. Congress should maintain investments for intercity passenger rail, including eligibility for high-speed rail projects that are effectively managed.

Finally, we ask that the reauthorization maintains a focus on streamlining the delivery of infrastructure projects nationwide. We would support legislation that advances the ongoing efforts of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to simplify grant application processes and enhance access to federal funding for small and rural agencies. Our agencies ask you to continue streamlining project permitting processes, including *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)* reviews, by requiring federal interagency coordination to be fulfilled on reasonable and established timelines that avoid delays to project schedules. Please consider providing reciprocity between NEPA and the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)* reviews. We also encourage lawmakers to reconsider the utility of National Performance Management Measures implemented by DOT, which have hampered the delivery of our infrastructure projects.

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The San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council is grateful for your continued leadership.

We applaud your legislative efforts to invest in our region's infrastructure, strengthen our goods movement, support economic development, and help provide opportunity for our constituents. Please let us know how we can best support your efforts as Congress considers this legislation. We appreciate your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

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