



September 26, 2019

Chairman Lenny Mendonca
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 620
Sacramento CA 95814

RE: MERCED-FRESNO-BAKERSFIELD INTERIM OPERATING SEGMENT
SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Mendonca:

The Merced County Board of Supervisors would like to express its support for the Governor's Plan and California High-Speed Rail Authority's policy recommendations (2019 Project Update Report released May 1) regarding High-Speed Rail. Passenger rail service is becoming an increasingly-critical travel component throughout the Valley, and pursuing a Merced-Fresno-Bakersfield Interim Operating Segment with stops at Kings/Tulare and Madera would be immensely helpful in achieving regional transportation objectives.

There are several benefits to this 171-mile Interim Operating Segment between Merced and Bakersfield, not the least of which are direct connections in Merced to ACE and the San Joaquins. This passenger rail connection will translate to improved travel times and faster connections to the Capitol, Caltrain, BART, SacRT, Valley Link and VTA systems.

The implementation of the interim service will be vital in developing the ultimate High-Speed Rail system between Southern California, the San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento and the Bay Area. Benefits include improved air quality, less roadway congestion, faster and more frequent passenger rail service, and the potential for early testing of high-speed operations.

On behalf of the Merced County Board of Supervisors, thank you for your consideration of the Merced-Fresno-Bakersfield Interim Operating Segment.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Pareira, Chairman
Merced County Board of Supervisors

cc: *Chief Executive Officer Brian Kelly, California High-Speed Rail Authority*
Chief Financial Officer Brian Annis, California High-Speed Rail Authority
Chief Deputy Secretary Chad Edison, Ca/STA
Paul J. Yoder, Partner, SYASL
Karen Lange, Partner, SYASL

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