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June 6, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx  
U.S. Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: San Joaquin Valley Railroad Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Foxx:

As the Chair and Vice Chair of the Assembly Transportation Committee, we are writing to express our full support of Tulare County's TIGER VI application for the San Joaquin Valley Railroad Improvement Project. This rural transportation route of the San Joaquin Valley Shortline Railroad (SJVR) provides the only dual Class 1 railroad connection between the national freight rail network interchange in Fresno, CA and numerous communities throughout Fresno, Tulare and Kings Counties. The project funding will strengthen and preserve the strategic transportation corridor by replacing aging track infrastructure providing safer and more efficient operations to boost the economic liveliness of the region. The plan will also safely expedite the interchanging of rail traffic along an entire modern 286,000 lb. rural freight route for agriculture, manufacturing, processing and other important freight shipments.

Tulare County relies heavily on goods movement because of its agricultural production, centralized location and distribution centers. Goods movement in the San Joaquin Valley is currently dominated by a single transportation mode, notably, trucking. In 2007, of the 500 million tons of goods that moved into, out of, or within the region, more than 90% moved by truck. The commodity flow of products entering and leaving Tulare County are diverse and numerous. Every day, farm products, aggregates, food, materials, fuels, paper products, plastics, electronics, textiles, and countless other items move through the corridor on their way to communities across the world. It is anticipated that goods movement will continue to grow from 2007 to 2040 by an average of 56%.

Goods movement is a vital part of the Central Valley's regional economy and the state's transportation system. Securing and improving the goods movement system is a key goal of the Assembly Transportation Committee. Future goods movement efforts will focus on reducing the impacts that goods movement has on traffic, state and local roadways and the regions poor air quality. Supporting the use of rail as a measure to alleviate conditions resulting from truck transport by pursuing best suited solutions and collaborating with stakeholders will have an extreme impact on the farms that grow and, packing houses that pack and ship agriculture produce nationally and worldwide.

Sincerely,

BONNIE LOWENTHAL, Chair  
Assembly Transportation Committee

ERIC LINDER, Vice Chair  
Assembly Transportation Committee