

# Memorandum

**To:** Chair and Commissioners

**Date:** March 21, 2003

**From:** Diane C. Eidam

**File:**  
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Information

**Ref.:** Report By Rural Counties Task Force Chair

This is an information item from the Rural Counties Task Force Chair, George Dondero. George will also give an oral report regarding the May 21, 2003 Task Force meeting with comments on agenda items as appropriate.

# CALIFORNIA RURAL COUNTIES TASK FORCE

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March 21, 2002

Mr. Kirk Lindsey, Chair  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, Room 2221  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Lindsey,

On behalf of the 28 rural counties in California, I wish to express thanks to you and the Commission for the many long days of work toward reaching a solution to the current funding crisis. As you work towards a solution to resolve the funding challenges in the 2002 STIP, I would like to reiterate several concerns of the rural counties.

1. We understand the Commission has a vacancy, and would ask the Commissioners to encourage the Governor to appoint a person from a rural area. A rural perspective on the Commission is important in maintaining balance and equity.
2. Keep the STIP process whole – it has worked well since the passage of SB45, and although not the most elegant process, we feel it serves the interest of Californians, both rural and urban to stay the course - even in difficult times.
3. Please do not give TCR projects priority over other STIP projects. The Traffic Congestion Relief program was established during a time of General Fund surplus. The TCR is now essentially an unfunded program and should not compete with the STIP. It is our hope the legislature will take action on the TCR soon.
4. Continue to allocate Planning, Programming & Monitoring (PP&M) funds to the rural counties. These funds are critical to keeping our operations alive. Most of the urban counties have other fund sources to keep their agencies running. The rurals have very limited resources and the availability of PP&M funds to keep projects moving is not an option – it is essential. In addition, PP&M to rural counties represents a very small part of the overall transportation budget.

Thank you for considering the rural perspective at the Commission meetings. We look forward to assisting you in any way possible to continue delivery of the very best transportation projects possible.

Sincerely,

George A. Dondero, II  
Chair