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April 14, 2009

Mr. Bob Alvarado, Chair  
 California Transportation Commission  
 1120 N Street  
 Room 2221 (MS-52)  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) request for STIP funds

Dear Chair Alvarado:

The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), with its partner, Caltrans, has been working to complete the last two segments of the five mile Highway 101 HOV Lane Gap Closure project through San Rafael. This five mile corridor has been under construction for 8 years, with the last segment finally nearing completion. The total corridor value is over \$200 million, however, the project has run short of funds. North Bay Leadership Council urges the CTC to support TAM's request for \$2 million, which is less than 1 percent of the project's total cost, to match \$2.1 million approved by MTC so that the project can be finished.

This money is urgently needed so that the carpool lanes will be continuous without interruption, the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) railroad right-of-way will be relocated to accommodate the widening of the highway, and the voter-approved bicycle/pedestrian pathway will be built. These multi-modal facilities are very important to the residents, commuters and business community as they enable access by other modes, an important consideration in these times of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fighting climate change. They are also important in providing commuters with alternatives to driving alone and the accompanying ever increasing costs.

The voters approved a sales tax to help fund these project components that TAM has spent wisely. TAM has received funding from MTC to address additional work, especially on the bicycle/pedestrian facilities, so that they can be completed. But TAM is short of funding for the highway project completion. Please note that TAM has returned \$6.6 million to the project to address changes, which is a complement to the \$2 million being requested of the CTC.

This section of Highway 101 through Marin County has congestion so extreme that it is rated as the second or third worst area of congestion in the Bay Area. It also carries nearly 10% of the truck traffic or goods movement from the Bay Area north to and through the Redwood Empire. It is critical to the economic future of this region and to the retention and attraction of jobs, that this project be finally completed. Our very economic recovery depends upon it!

Please support this request for the last funding needed to improve this section of Highway 101 so that we may have the continuous carpool lanes as we have longed needed, and reap the benefits of having this major area of gridlock receive the congestion relief that is long overdue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Cynthia Murray*

Cynthia Murray

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