



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

October 13, 2023

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your continued leadership in advancing innovative infrastructure improvements around the nation. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) is having a meaningful impact across the country and certainly here in California. The Act is putting Americans—including Californians—to work building the projects of tomorrow that secure this nation's role as a global leader when it comes to economic development, safety, innovation, equity, and environmental stewardship.

I, specifically, want to thank you for the recent award of nearly \$202 million dollars from the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program to the California High Speed Rail Authority (the Authority) for vital grade separation projects in this state's Central Valley. This grant award will enable the Authority to complete six grade separations in the city of Shafter. These projects will put Californians to work in a disadvantaged community expanding the high-speed rail project south towards Bakersfield. The projects will also save lives by eliminating six dangerous at-grade crossings where several collisions between automobiles and freight trains have led to injuries and fatalities. Safety, equity, economy, mobility—these projects advance your Administration's expressed goals of the IIJA. Thank you for recognizing the value of this work.

The single-most important element in assuring the successful development of high-speed rail in California (and across the country) is a strong partnership with the federal government. The working relationship between your Federal Railroad Administration and the Authority here in California has never been better. The CRISI grant award is yet another example of that very strong partnership.

Of course, there is more to do. Still pending at the United States Department of Transportation is the Authority's application for \$3 billion in federal funding from the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (Fed-State Program).

California—currently funding 85% of this project—will match those federal funds with \$754 million in state dollars. The combined investment will allow the Authority to achieve the following objectives:

1. Complete the initial 119-mile segment currently under construction with a double track.
2. Procure six electric high-speed trains for testing and passenger service at speeds up to 220 miles per hour.
3. Construct a new high-speed rail station in downtown Fresno.
4. Complete the design and early works for the extensions into downtown Merced and downtown Bakersfield, moving the project to “construction ready” for the entire 171-mile early operating segment connecting Merced, Fresno, and Bakersfield, the three largest cities in California's fastest growing region.
5. Advance design work for extensions into the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles Basin.

I respectfully reiterate my request for your Administration's favorable consideration of the Authority's Fed-State Program grant application. Awarding this grant will further cement our already strong partnership toward advancing clean, transformative electrified high-speed rail in America, fostering the associated emerging industries in America, and expanding the availability of good, well-paying union jobs in disadvantaged communities, where more than 11,000 construction jobs have already been created in California alone.

Your leadership to get the IIJA enacted and implemented is paying dividends across America. Your Administration has worked hard to advance the right infrastructure for America's future. California is building that kind of infrastructure—clean, safe, equitable, transformative. Thank you, again, for the award of the CRISI grant. To ensure our continued success, I strongly urge your Administration's favorable consideration of the Authority's pending application for Fed-State Program funding. Working together, we will continue to expand the economy, put people to work and build world-class infrastructure benefiting generations to come.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom
Governor of California