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California State Senate

SENATOR
BOB WIECKOWSKI
TENTH SENATE DISTRICT



CHAIR
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE #2

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TRANSPORTATION

November 14, 2019

Dan Leavitt, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission
949 East Channel Street
Stockton, CA 95202

RE: East Bay Rail Vision for FASTER Bay Area

Dear Dan Leavitt,

The Altamont Corridor that connects the San Joaquin Valley to the Bay Area is one of the most heavily traveled, most congested, and fastest growing corridors in the Northern California megaregion. The Bay Area Council estimates that congestion will increase an additional 75% between 2016 and 2040. To achieve state and regional environmental and economic development goals, robust passenger rail is needed in the Altamont Corridor and throughout the East Bay and Silicon Valley to increase mobility, provide greater connectivity, achieve a better quality of life, and access to jobs, educational opportunities and health care facilities.

I write to you today to express my support of a comprehensive rail infrastructure plan that will better connect our transit systems for people and goods movement in the East Bay and the San Joaquin Valley. Many components are encapsulated in the Altamont Corridor Vision 1 Improvement Program, but there are several more projects that must be advanced. As the legislature works with local leaders and the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Bay Area Council, and SPUR to place the FASTER Bay Area plan on the November 2020 ballot for Bay Area voters, I look forward to projects that will contribute to our long-term success:

Valley Link: I support the \$1.9 billion Valley Link project as described in the Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvement Program. This program calls for the implementation of 8.6-miles of new alignment through the Altamont Pass to be used by both ACE and Valley Link services. This new alignment through the Altamont Pass would include a 3.5 mile tunnel and enable speeds up to 125 mph that would decrease train travel times through the Altamont Pass by 11 – 15 minutes. The vastly improved infrastructure through the Altamont Pass would be separated from freight, double tracked, grade separated, and enable fast and frequent service. Bay Area Phase 1 (over please)

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improvements also include funding for equipment and the additional infrastructure needed to complete the Valley Link service between Dublin/Pleasanton BART and Livermore. In the near-term, the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority anticipates running 25 Valley Link daily round-trips between Dublin/Pleasanton BART and North Lathrop Transfer Station in San Joaquin County. In addition, Phase 1 also includes funding for new ACE equipment and Bay Area station/alignment improvements for two additional ACE round-trips between the San Joaquin Valley and San Jose.

Shinn BART/ACE Station: An infill transfer station at the crossing of the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) and BART lines in Fremont in the Shinn neighborhood creates an important point of connection for ACE riders wanting to transfer directly to the BART system and get to jobs, services, and entertainment in the East Bay and Silicon Valley. Much of the area surrounding this crossing consists of abandoned industrial plants and rail yards. A Shinn station present a unique opportunity for connecting these two systems, as well as the proposed Dumbarton Rail system and a re-aligned Capitol Corridor line. I have secured funding for a study of this project, which is being conducted by the MTC.

There are several other projects that we must continue to study, including capacity expansion through congested corridors and additional connections between our existing network and future rail systems.

As Chair of the Senate Budget Subcommittee #2 on Resources, Environmental Protection, Energy, and Transportation, I plan to continue my work in making these important rail and infrastructure priorities move forward. I look forward to working with you and our regional partners to modernize and advance our transportation infrastructure for the rest of the 21st century.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert A. Wieckowski".

Bob Wieckowski
Senator, 10th District

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