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August 7, 2020

Mr. Darwin Moosavi
Deputy Secretary for Environmental Policy and Housing Coordination
California State Transportation Agency
915 Capitol Mall, Suite 350B
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Executive Order N-19-19 Draft Transportation Action Plan and Investment Strategies

Dear Deputy Secretary Moosavi:

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) draft Executive Order (EO) N-19-19 Transportation Action Plan and Investment Strategies. EO N-19-19 directs CalSTA to leverage discretionary state transportation funds to reduce statewide fuel consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the transportation sector by implementing various strategies. Strategies listed include aligning transportation spending with the state's Climate Change Scoping Plan where feasible, reducing vehicles miles traveled by supporting housing production near available jobs consistent with the state's smart growth principles, reducing congestion through strategies that encourage people to shift from cars to other modes of transportation, funding transportation options that improve public health and reduce GHG emissions, and mitigating increases in transportation costs for lower income Californians.

As the organization representing 25 county transportation agencies, the Self-Help Counties Coalition (SHCC) and its member agencies are dedicated to keeping the public's confidence by delivering voter-approved transportation sales tax measures throughout California. In doing so, SHCC seeks to inform public policy to facilitate the ability of the state to meet its transportation infrastructure needs, as demonstrated by the delivery by member agencies of billions of dollars each year in multimodal transportation improvements that support connectivity, economic growth, and air quality objectives.

While we appreciate the opportunity to take the survey on the draft Transportation Action Plan and Investment Strategies, we feel a more collaborative process would be preferable.

The survey format is not conducive to a mutual exchange of ideas. With the current approach, it appears that the draft Investment Strategies are essentially final with perhaps some opportunity to rank them. A more collaborative process can also provide additional clarity on how the strategies will be applied to meet the objectives of EO N-19-19. This proposed dialogue can also address any strategies that are not yet on the list so that the meaning and intent of all strategies can be thoroughly considered. We suggest a workshop connected to the October California Transportation Commission meeting to address the strategies.

Of particular concern for the SHCC, the draft Transportation Action Plan and Investment Strategies do not specifically address local sales tax measures or how measure-funded projects and programs may be impacted. Likewise, the draft Investment Strategies do not explicitly highlight the importance of maintaining consistency with the provisions of SB 1 (Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017), including its focus on state highway system and local roadway systems preservation. These are critical components that are worthy of being considered as part of the state's transportation vision.

*Alameda County
Transportation Commission*

*Contra Costa
Transportation Authority*

*Fresno County
Transportation Authority*

*Imperial County
Transportation Commission*

*Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority*

*Madera County
Transportation Commission*

*Transportation Authority
Of Marin*

*Merced County Association
of Governments*

*Transportation Agency for
Monterey County*

*Napa Valley Transportation
Authority*

*Orange County
Transportation Authority*

*Riverside County
Transportation Commission*

*Sacramento
Transportation Authority*

*Santa Barbara County
Association of Governments*

San Benito County

*San Bernardino
County Transportation
Authority*

*Santa Clara Valley
Transportation Authority*

*Santa Cruz County Regional
Transportation Commission*

*San Diego
Association of Governments*

*San Francisco County
Transportation Authority*

*San Joaquin
Council of Governments*

*San Mateo County
Transportation Authority*

*Sonoma County
Transportation Authority*

*Stanislaus Council of
Governments*

*Tulare County
Association of Governments*

Furthermore, given the wide-spread and significant economic impacts resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, it is critical that the draft Transportation Action Plan and Investment Strategies not only respond to EO N-19-19 but also serve as an effective tool for putting California on a path to recovery.

We urge CalSTA to fully engage with partners like SHCC and our member agencies to ensure that the transportation vision embodied in these strategies recognizes that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach for our diverse communities and range of investment strategies. Likewise, we see significant value to expanding the dialogue and draft Transportation Action Plan and Investment Strategies development process to an open forum comprised of stakeholders ranging from transportation agencies, the business community, labor, housing, environmental, and equity advocates. Such an open and collaborative process will help to ensure the Action Plan is reflects the perspectives of the state, while also maintaining a common understanding of the intent in any proposed strategies.

On behalf of SHCC and our member agencies, we encourage CalSTA to seize this opportunity to make the implementation of EO N-19-19 truly effective and begin an open and collaborative stakeholder engagement process. This will inform the development of investment strategies, including those currently proposed, as well as how best to implement the strategies. This can take a multi-prong approach, which includes presenting before the California Transportation Commission in October and holding public workshops open to all stakeholders, to collaborate and define the investment strategies and any action plan moving forward.

Thank you for your commitment to this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keith N. Dunn".

Keith N. Dunn
Executive Director