

Kathryn K. Floyd

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February 23, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Ms. Danielle Gosselin
Acting Director
Surface Transportation Board
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Finance Docket No. 35941, High Desert Corridor—Los Angeles and San Bernardino
Counties California

Dear Ms. Gosselin,

I am writing on behalf of the High Desert Corridor Joint Powers Authority (“HDCJPA”) regarding the proposed High Desert Corridor Project (the “Project”), an approximately 54-mile highspeed passenger rail line between Victor Valley/Town of Apple Valley and Palmdale, California. The Project would connect existing Metrolink service and future California High-Speed Rail service in Palmdale to the DesertXpress Enterprises, LLC/XpressWest High-Speed Train Project in Victor Valley/Town of Apple Valley, ultimately allowing for passenger rail service from Los Angeles and the Central Valley of California to Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Office of Environmental Analysis previously agreed to serve as a cooperating agency during the NEPA/CEQA environmental review process for the Project that was being led by the California Department of Transportation. That process culminated in the issuance of a final environmental impact statement (“EIS”)/environmental impact report (“EIR”) in 2016. The proposed project evaluated in that 2016 EIS/EIR included both a highway component and a highspeed rail component. Subsequently, it was decided that the highway component of the project would not be pursued at this time. Thus, the Project being proposed by the HDCJPA is only the highspeed rail component.

As you are aware, the Federal Railroad Administration (“FRA”) currently is conducting a reevaluation of the 2016 EIS/EIR. It is anticipated that elimination of the highway component—and resulting diminution of construction and operation impacts—will not require preparation of a full supplemental EIS. The purpose of this letter is to reinstate the environmental review process with OEA.

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HDCJPA looks forward to working with both the FRA and STB/OEA as the ongoing reevaluation progresses. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Kusske Floyd

cc: Ken Blodgett, OEA
Arthur Sohikian Executive Director, HDCJPA
Kathryn Barger, HDCJPA Chair
Col. Paul Cook (Ret.), HDCJPA Vice Chair
Dave Perry, HDCJPA Board Member
Darrell Dorris, HDCJPA Board Member
Steven D. Hofbauer, HDCJPA Board Member
Gabriel Reyes, HDCJPA Board Member
Debra Jones, HDCJPA Board Member
Scott Nassif, HDCJPA Board Member
Scott Steinwert, Circlepoint
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