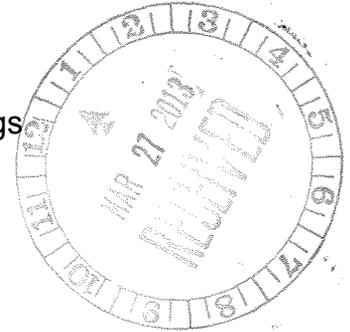


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FD 35724

The Honorable Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Surface Transportation Board
395 W. Street, S.W., Room 100
Washington, DC 20423-0001

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
March 27, 2013
Part of
Public Record



March 21, 2013

Subject: California High Speed Rail Project Request for Permit and Public Hearing

Dear Ms. Brown:

My name is Karen J. Stout, and I live in Kings Count, California. I am currently concerned with the path that the California High Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is taking in pursuing the California High Speed Rail Project (HSR Project). Residents in California were misled in 2008 when the Authority and the California Legislature requested that the voters of California approve a \$9.95 billion bond to support the HSR Project. Under false information the voters approved this measure, which is commonly referred to as Proposition 1A and expected that a high-speed rail project spanning from San Francisco to Los Angeles with connections to Sacramento and San Diego would be built by 2020 for approximately \$38 billion. Over many alterations and manipulations the Authority plans to have initial operation service open by 2032, and the cost now is \$68 billion to only connect San Francisco to L.A. Further complicating the project is the fact that only \$6 billion has been identified for construction, and the financing plan relies almost exclusively on private sector investment and the Federal government, or which neither has come up with any funds beyond the \$6 billion.

As much as this is a troubled project from a financial perspective, this project stands to have significant impacts on our local agricultural communities and our local existing public transportation systems. The Authority has based their alignment decisions on early closed door meeting between politicians and engineers, which have led to the alignments traveling along the east-side of the Central Valley of California. What lies in the way of the alignment are multi-generational farming operation, low-income communities and existing freight and inter-city passenger rail systems. The proposed HSR Project interferes with each of these in a significant manner, and all of which have been downplayed and/or ignored by the Authority.

I implore you to please open this project to a full investigation. This is your duty as an agency to oversee passenger rail service and freight rail service. **The currently planned HSR Project has a significant chance of creating negative impacts that will be deeply felt not only in this state but also across the nation. Americans are spoiled with cheap food prices. The more impacts agriculture has in this "Bread Basket" of the world the more food prices will raise. There are other alignments through alkali ground instead of prime and statewide-importance agricultural land.** As part of this investigation I also request that it be carried out in a public fashion, with all attempts made for hearing to be held in California. The public has continually been misled by the Authority and has had to work diligently to counter the misinformation being provided by the Authority staff and numerous consultants. The public should be afforded all opportunities to relay concerns and issues with your board.

I would like to keep apprised of this issue in the future and any notices or findings on this case can be sent to me at the address or email address provided in the letter. I look forward to providing future comments and concerns.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Karen J. Stout in cursive.

Karen J. Stout
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