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**Workforce**  
Investment Board

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*Executive Director*  
Blake Konczal

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ENTERED  
Office of Proceedings  
May 16, 2013  
Part of  
Public Record

May 8, 2013

Ms. Cynthia Brown  
Chief Section of Administration  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

**RE: Comments Concerning California High-Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRA) Petition for Exemption – Docket No. FD 35724**

Dear Ms. Brown:

On behalf of the Fresno Regional Workforce Investment Board (FRWIB), I write to respectfully urge the Surface Transportation Board (Board) to expeditiously grant the petition for exemption filed by the CHSRA for the construction of the 65-mile Madera to Fresno Section.

The FRWIB serves as a catalyst to mobilize and integrate private and public partners to effectively educate, train and place individuals with the necessary resources and skills to fulfill employer needs. We offer a dynamic and comprehensive workforce investment system through our Workforce Connection One-Stop Centers.

As high-speed rail planning is happening throughout the nation and California's project is the first of its kind entering construction, I can appreciate that the Board's decision has important implications from this point forward. As such, I do believe that careful consideration is warranted, but this should not result in lengthy delay. Expeditious approval of the petition for exemption is greatly needed for the reasons enumerated below.

The CSHR project will soon provide thousands of local jobs and contract opportunities for local businesses which are urgently needed. By putting local residents and businesses back to work, the project is not simply supporting those local companies directly contracting with the Authority, but other local businesses that benefit when residents have additional income to spend on items for themselves and their families.

Should the project face a prolonged delay, local businesses impacted by the high-speed rail alignment would be faced with great uncertainty. Many of these businesses have expressed a desire for a clear timeline for acquisition and compensation, and some would prefer an expeditious timeline. To have an extended period of uncertainty would be detrimental

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to the property owners and businesses. Those businesses that lease to others will find that their ability to retain/attract tenants may be further compromised. In addition, those businesses that have been making arrangements based on anticipated property acquisition schedules will lose trust with the process.

For these reasons stated above, I strongly and respectfully urge the Board to grant the petition for exemption for the Madera to Fresno Section.

Sincerely,



Blake Konczal  
Executive Director

bk:cl

c: Secretary Ray LaHood, DOT  
Jeff Morales, CHSRA



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## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

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*Executive Director*

Blake Konczal

I hereby certify that on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May 2013, I have served a copy of this comment by first class mail, postage paid, addressed to the following:

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Executed on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May 2013 at Fresno, CA.

Blake G. Konczal  
Executive Director

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