



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

May 8, 2013

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

Dear Ms. Brown:

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

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 Surface Transportation Board's (Board) 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. Expedient 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 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.

Respectfully,

Henry R. Perea, Chair
Fresno Works





I hereby certify that on 10th day of May 2013, I have served a copy of this comment by US mail, postage paid, addressed to the following:

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Executed on this 10th day of May 2013 at Fresno, CA

Henry Perea, Fresno Works Chairman

