



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

November 7, 2014

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The Honorable Daniel R. Elliott III, Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 40423-0001

RE: California High-Speed Rail Authority: Petition for Declaratory Order

Dear Chairman Elliott,

We are writing in opposition to the petition filed by the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) on October 9, 2014, in which CHSRA requested that the Surface Transportation Board issue a declaratory order concerning the availability of injunctive remedies under the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA).

As Members of Congress representing California's Central Valley, we want to make sure the high speed rail project is thoroughly reviewed in all areas and that all applicable laws are followed. The proposed route from Fresno to Bakersfield crosses many diverse environments, including agricultural farmland and tribal lands, and will affect millions of people who call the Central Valley home. Given the location and the potential consequences of the high speed rail project, we feel it is critical that our constituents in the Valley be able to appropriately review the project's impact on their community and that the appropriate remedies be made available to them. With multiple lawsuits working their way through our State's judicial system on this very issue, the CHSRA's petition is an attempt to end-run around California's environmental protection laws, thereby denying our constituents the opportunity to participate in the regulatory process and fully exercise their legal rights.

This project has changed drastically from what was promised to voters, and this is another attempt by the CHSRA to skirt the law. On behalf of our constituents, we urge you to reject the CHSRA's petition and require CHSRA to adhere to state and federal laws, as well as any judicial determinations, as it continues to develop and construct high speed rail in California.

Sincerely,

David G. Valadao
Member of Congress

Kevin McCarthy
Member of Congress

Jeff Denham
Member of Congress

Devin G. Nunes
Member of Congress