Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE – 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We are writing to urge the Department of Transportation to maintain its commitments to the State of California's High Speed Rail System.

This month, the state responded to the Department's threat to cancel $929 million in federal funding that Congress appropriated in FY 2010. In its letter, the state has detailed how it remains in compliance with the terms of the grant agreement. If the Department has specific cause for concern with the performance of the High Speed Rail Authority, we ask that you work constructively with the state to identify and remedy these concerns.

The High Speed Rail project is already well underway on its first segment through the Central Valley. More than 2,600 workers and 488 small businesses are hard at work at 20 construction sites. The federal government has only funded $2.5 billion of the $5.2 billion spent to date, and has only committed to provide the additional $929 million after the state spends $4.8 billion more of its own resources. This is a much smaller federal share than the 80 percent typically provided for new highway construction. Completion of this work would meet the fundamental purpose for which federal funds were granted.

Cancelling the Department's commitment to fulfill its outstanding legal obligations and attempting to claw back funding already lawfully spent would be unjustified and harmful. This unprecedented action would invite years of litigation and would cause the Federal government to be rightly viewed as an unreliable and politically motivated partner on all future infrastructure investments throughout the country.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

We urge you to maintain the Department's legal obligations and resume working with the State of California to ensure the California High Speed Rail project will be a success. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Lou Correa
Member of Congress

TJ Cox
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Susan Davis
Member of Congress

Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

John Garamendi
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress