

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 6, 2017

Mr. Steve Heminger
Executive Director
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Steve,

As 2017 draws to a close, we reflect back on some positive steps the Bay Area has taken to improve its transportation situation under the leadership of the MTC. Most notably, we are most proud of our regional effort to secure the release of funding of Caltrain's Full Funding Grant Agreement, allowing the Caltrain electrification project to proceed, and the initiation of service of the long awaited SMART train in the North Bay. Thank you for your work and your leadership on these projects, as well as on all other fronts.

That said, we both know that there remain tremendous challenges in front of us. The traffic demands on our streets and transit systems have become intolerable. Quality of life is suffering; and, our economy is not nearly thriving as much as it could be if these transportation challenges were addressed. We know you see these challenges and we recognize that you and the State Legislature, in an attempt to address this, have moved forward your plans for Regional Measure III, which, if approved by the electorate, will produce significant revenue to fund a great number of necessary traffic improvement projects throughout the Bay Area.

While we appreciate the Regional Measure III effort, we do not think it comes anywhere close to addressing one of the most significant traffic problems facing the Bay Area – namely, the need for an additional route across the Bay for both BART and vehicular traffic. As your annual analysis of freeway congestion demonstrated earlier this Fall, the most congested freeway segments in the Bay Area for the second year in a row are the afternoon commutes northbound and eastbound on U.S. 101 and Interstate 80 from the I-280 interchange in San Francisco to the Bay Bridge's Yerba Buena Island Tunnel. Moreover, the next most congested route is the westbound direction on I-80, through the Bay Bridge, to Fremont Street. A new Bay crossing would alleviate this traffic through San Francisco and the East Bay, would better connect the entire Bay Area, and would provide significant benefits for toll payers.

We have communicated in the past about the need for another Bay crossing, but this has not led to any concrete action. We need to move this issue forward expeditiously, and we would very much like your assistance in doing so. Please let us know what steps the MTC can take to move forward a new Bay crossing for both transit and vehicles, and more importantly, what we can do to assist you in this endeavor.

We urge you to give this matter your full consideration and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator



Mark DeSaulnier
Member, House of Representatives

CC: Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Senator Jim Beall, Chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Housing
Assembly Member Jim Frazier, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Transportation
Commission Chair, Jake Mackenzie, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Commission Vice Chair, Scott Haggerty, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Secretary Brian Kelly, California Transportation Agency
Commission Chair Bob Alvarado, California Transportation Commission