



January 23, 2024

Governor Gavin Newsom  
 1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Protecting Funding for Transportation Infrastructure Projects**

Governor Newsom and members California Transportation Commission,

Our broad coalition of local governments, labor, employers, transportation advocates and community leaders was instrumental in the passage of Senate Bill 1 in 2017 (the Road Repair and Accountability Act) as well as Proposition 69 which constitutionally dedicated transportation funding for a broad range of transportation purposes. We share the state's transportation and climate goals. Thanks in part to our coalition's efforts, California is investing to maintain and improve our state's long neglected and deteriorating transportation infrastructure system which remains woefully underfunded and at risk of worsening.

We are writing to express our significant concern about organizations that are waging an escalating lobbying campaign pushing to significantly erode and even [eliminate funding for infrastructure projects](#) that may potentially increase vehicle miles traveled.

Every component of California's transportation system is critical to providing a seamless, interconnected system that supports the traveling public and economic vitality throughout the state. Sustainable communities cannot function without a well-maintained local street and road system that in-turn provides access for transit and active modes of transportation like bicycling and walking.

Make no mistake: this extreme approach to defund critical transportation projects is a total affront to the voters of California who have overwhelmingly and repeatedly voted – including 81% of voters who passed Prop 69 in 2018 – to dedicate transportation funding to transportation improvement and expansion projects. It's also an affront to millions of voters in 25 counties that have passed local transportation funding measures with dedicated funding to local streets and roads.

Furthermore, this dangerous approach to eliminate transportation funding will negatively impact the quality of life for tens of millions of Californians who rely on well-maintained streets and roads, safe bridges and overpasses, and navigable freeways and highways every single day. In particular, these policies disproportionately harm low-income and historically disadvantaged communities of color who have longer commutes and who can least afford the wear and tear caused by deteriorating and congested roads. To be clear, our coalition supports an “all of the above” transportation investment approach that includes continued funding for local streets and roads, bridges and overpasses, freeway and highway improvements, *and* public transportation. We strongly support transportation projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions to improve air quality and address climate change, including investments in public transit and active transportation like bike and pedestrian lanes.

Since the passage of the federal [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) (IIJA) in 2021, and the state's passage of Senate Bill 1, California has made historic investments in public transportation, mass transit and active transportation, but much more must be done.

Under SB 1 funding [California has invested \\$3.5 billion](#) in planned, completed, or in-progress transit, commuter rail, bike and walking path projects in just the last five years. And California's [2023-2024 state budget](#) provides \$5.1 billion in funding for public transit — \$4 billion in Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program funding, and \$1.1 billion in zero-emission vehicle transit funding.

Also, while investing in transit projects is absolutely necessary, we cannot neglect other transportation infrastructure. According to [TRIP](#), a national transportation research nonprofit, 52% of California's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. Furthermore, [Save California Streets](#), who compiles data from local cities and counties on the conditions of their local streets and roads, reported a decrease in overall road quality since 2020, resulting in the roads in 54/58 counties being graded as “at risk” or “poor.”

The overall needs of local transportation infrastructure are estimated at \$118.7 billion over the next 10 years. While SB 1 provides \$54.7 billion in funding, a shortfall of \$64 billion still exists.

Driving on deteriorated roads costs California motorists \$22 billion a year – \$808 per driver – in the form of additional repairs, accelerated vehicle depreciation, and increased fuel consumption and tire wear. These impacts disproportionately hurt low-income and disadvantaged families by taking up a larger share of their overall income.

Studies confirm long commutes on congested roads and freeways have a disproportionate impact on people of color and lower-income families. According to the [UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation](#), *“due in part to the high cost of housing near job and transit centers, many low- and moderate-income individuals are stuck with long commutes in vehicles that are older, less efficient, and costlier to maintain than the average privately owned vehicle.”*

In addition, California is leading in electric vehicle adoption – further reducing carbon emissions. Rapidly expanding our electric vehicle fleet requires continued investments in local streets and roads, bridges and highways and freeways to account for the added wear and tear caused by heavier electric vehicles.

We urge you to protect the overwhelming will of California voters and the welfare of the majority of Californians by rejecting extreme, exclusive policy proposals that would defund necessary transportation infrastructure improvements. Please continue to support “all-of-the-above”, inclusive transportation funding policies that support our state’s residents and that do not leave millions behind.

Sincerely,

Michael Quigley, Executive Director  
**California Alliance for Jobs**

Kiana Valentine, Executive Director  
**Transportation California**

Graham Knaus, Chief Executive Officer  
**California State Association of Counties**

Carolyn Coleman, Executive Director and CEO  
**League of California Cities**

Lisa Ann Rapp, Chair  
**The California Chapters of the American  
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**CA/HI State Conference NAACP**

Brad Shelton, President  
**Professional Engineers in California  
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Peter Tateishi, Chief Executive Officer  
**Associated General Contractors of California**

Yazdan Emrani, Director  
**American Society of Civil Engineers Region 9**

Jacob Sandoval, State Director  
**California LULAC**

James Thuerwachter, Legislative Advocate  
**California State Council of Laborers**

Tyler Munzing, Director of Government Affairs  
**American Council of Engineering Companies,  
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Jennifer Barrera, President & CEO  
**California Chamber of Commerce**

Matt Cremins, Western Region Political Director  
**International Union of Operating Engineers**

John Bly, Executive Vice President  
**Engineering Contractors Association**

Jon Switalski, Executive Director  
**Rebuild SoCal Partnership**

Rosanne Foust, President & CEO  
**San Mateo County Economic Development  
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Robert Dugan, President & CEO  
**California Construction and Industrial  
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Emily Cohen, Executive Vice President  
**United Contractors**

Julian Canete, President & CEO  
**California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce**

Pat Fong Kushida, President & CEO  
**CalAsian Chamber of Commerce**

Tracy Hernandez, CEO  
**Los Angeles County Business Federation**

Jeffrey Ball, President & Chief Executive Officer  
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**San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership**

**Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce**

**San Pedro Chamber of Commerce**

Dan Dunmoyer, President & CEO  
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Charlie Nobles, Executive Director  
**Southern California Contractors Association**

Mark Waronek, Chair  
**South Bay Association of Chambers of  
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**California Trucking Association**

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**California Asphalt Pavement Association**

Jim Wunderman, President and CEO  
**Bay Area Council**

Paul C. Granillo, President and CEO  
**Inland Empire Economic Partnership**

**Harbor Association of Industry & Commerce**

Cindy Bonior, President & CEO  
**Fremont Chamber of Commerce**

Nicholas Adcock, President & CEO  
**Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce**

Caren Spilsbury, Executive Director  
**Gateway Chambers Alliance**

Cynthia Murray, President & CEO  
**North Bay Leadership Council**

**Garden Grove Chamber of Commerce**

CC: Members of the California Legislature  
California State Transportation Agency