

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 1, 2008

Administrator James S. Simpson  
Federal Transit Administration  
East Bldg, 4th & 5th Floors (Cubical E56-205)  
1200 New Jersey Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Simpson:

As Congress has recently approved the SAFETEA-LU Technical Corrections legislation, we are writing to express our strong support for language included in the bill that requires the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to consider local match funding for two critical projects in the southern California region. We also urge you to implement this language in a manner consistent with the Congressional intent with which it was written.

The Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority (Gold Line) and the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority (Expo) have developed two light rail line extensions that will serve significant populations in Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties. The following language included in the bill was crafted with the intent that both projects while at different stages in the Federal process would be given equal treatment by the FTA under the New Starts program and that the local funding previously expended is credited when determining the federal cost share.

(H) LOS ANGELES AND SAN GABRIEL VALLEY.--Section 3043 of such Act (119 Stat. 1640) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(k) Los Angeles Extension.--In evaluating the local share of the project authorized by subsection (c)(104A) in the new starts rating process, the Secretary shall give consideration to project elements of the project authorized by subsection (b)(13) advanced with 100 percent non-Federal funds.

“(l) San Gabriel Valley--Gold Line Foothill Extension Phase II.--In evaluating the local share of the San Gabriel Valley--Gold Line Foothill Extension Phase II project authorized by subsection (b)(33) in the new starts rating process, the Secretary shall give consideration to project elements of the San Gabriel Valley--Gold Line Foothill Extension Phase I project advanced with 100 percent non-Federal funds.”.

As the language states, significant non-federal funds have already been invested in completing the first phase of both projects. Regarding the Gold Line project, Section 3043(b) of SAFETEA-LU initially affirmed the Gold Line as a two-phased single project. The project line

is also defined in California State Law SB 1847 as a single project. The line begins in downtown Los Angeles and travels 13.7 miles to Pasadena, the current terminus. Phase II extends this line 24 miles connecting 11 additional cities with the new terminus planned for the city of Montclair at the western edge of San Bernardino County. The contiguous rights of way for Phase I/Phase II have been acquired and were purchased with non-Federal funds.

This project is critical to Southern California. It will serve an area of approximately 1.9 million residents and 30 municipalities with 15 world class educational institutions lining the corridor. It is situated along one of the nation's most congested freeways and in a region that is considered to be the worst non-attainment air quality area in the nation. The Gold Line will offer shorter commuting trips, increased energy savings (estimated 1.5 million gallons of gasoline each year) and reduced levels of pollution (estimated four tons of carbon monoxide). The Gold Line will also meet the needs of enormous population and employment growth. This project has spurred tremendous investment of over \$1 billion in private transit oriented development along the corridor. The project funding plan should rightfully be considered as a whole and as the FTA determines the federal match within the New Starts process, Phase I of the project, which was advanced with 100 percent non-Federal funds totaling over \$774 million, should be credited to Phase II.

The Exposition Light Rail Transit (Expo LRT) Project was adopted as Los Angeles County Metro's next rail priority in the Long Range Transportation Plan. Phase 1 of the Expo LRT, which is currently under construction with local funding, will connect downtown LA with USC and Culver City by 2010. Phase 2 of this project would extend the project to the City of Santa Monica with an expected ridership of 60,000 passengers daily and parallel the heavily congested I-10 freeway. The entire project will produce large benefits compared with costs, including increased mobility, reduced traffic congestion in the I-10 Corridor and reduced emissions pollution. Over the past 20 years, Los Angeles Metro has contributed, from state and local revenues, over 60 percent of the total \$8 billion invested to finance the extensive Metro Rail and Metro Bus system in Los Angeles County. The combined local match for Phase 1 and 2 Expo LRT will be between 50 and 60 percent, far more than the required statutory 20 percent.

Given the magnitude of the congestion in our region, the significant local support, clear precedent for crediting earlier expenditures on major transit projects (New Jersey, Houston, San Francisco, Salt Lake, Las Vegas) and investment in both projects as well as the critical need to provide a viable transit alternative to our constituents, the FTA should count the local matches for both projects. We stand ready to continue to work closely with you to ensure the success of the Gold Line and Expo projects.

Sincerely,

  
Dianne Feinstein

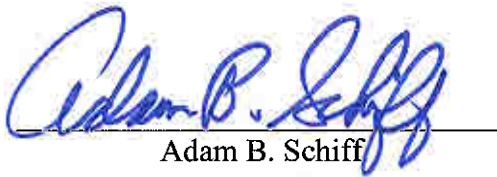
  
Barbara Boxer



David Dreier



Diane E. Watson



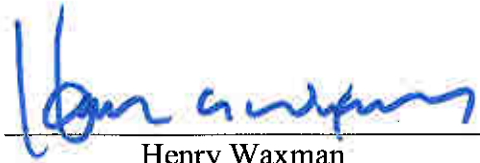
Adam B. Schiff



Lucille Roybal-Allard



Gary G. Miller



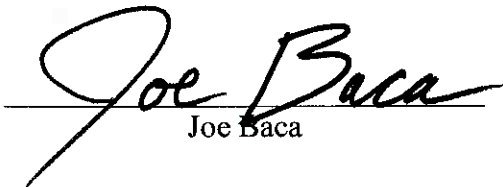
Henry Waxman



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