



May 22, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Department of Transportation, Secretary
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Support for \$25 million award to Caltrain electrification project under the Transit Investments for Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction (TIGGER) Program

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing to convey support for the \$25 million request by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board to help fund the conversion from diesel to electric power of the existing Caltrain commuter rail service between San Francisco and San Jose. Converting the existing railroad to electrification will meet both TIGGER program objectives: a) reduction in energy consumption; and b) reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with public transportation systems.

Electrifying Caltrain will result in a faster, more efficient and more environmentally friendly rail system, than current diesel powered trains. Electric trains can accelerate and decelerate faster than diesel trains, which are anticipated to provide a savings of 13 percent in travel time between San Francisco and San Jose. As Caltrain has decreased travel time through operational improvements, ridership has grown and is anticipated to continue to grow with additional time savings. Greater ridership would reduce road congestion and thereby decrease auto emissions. Additionally, the switch to electric locomotives will reduce air pollutant emissions from trains by up to 90 percent, and decrease power consumption significantly.

For these reasons, the Caltrain Electrification Program makes a strong contender for TIGGER funding.

Again, I strongly encourage you to award the full \$25 million to this worthy project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom
Mayor, City & County of San Francisco

cc: Walter Kulyk: Office of Mobility Innovation, Federal Transit Administration