



May 10, 2023

The Honorable Nancy Skinner  
Senate Budget Committee, Chair  
1021 O Street, Suite 8630  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Assembly Budget Committee, Chair  
1021 O Street, Suite 8230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo  
Senate Budget Subcommittee #5, Chair  
1021 O Street, Suite 7530  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Steve Bennett  
Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3  
1021 O Street, Suite 4710  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Transportation Budget Package Augmentation Request to Address Safety, Mobility, and Climate Resiliency on the Central Coast**

Dear Budget and Budget Subcommittee Chairs:

We, the members of the Central Coast Legislative Caucus, ask for your support for investments that will help advance the state's response to climate change by fortifying Central Coast highway infrastructure and enhancing safety, disaster recovery/mitigation, and goods movement along US 101.

The acceleration and increased intensity of climate events, underscored by the relentless atmospheric river storms this past winter, have severely battered Central Coast infrastructure. For example, this winter's storms flooded US 101 through Montecito for the second time in five years. As you know, US 101 serves as the only north-south connector in the state when inclement weather shuts down Interstate 5 and State Route 99 over the Grapevine. This also leads to additional traffic along necessary east-west connectors, such as State Routes 46, 120, and 132.

It is for this reason that California must make prudent, synergistic investments to fortify and complete this critical highway corridor to improve safety and congestion on our roads.

One option is to utilize the Budget Stabilization Account balance, which is at its constitutional maximum. Per the Governor's proposed FY 23-24 State Budget, \$951 million must be dedicated to infrastructure investments. We request that this revenue source be utilized to address projects to help facilitate emergency response, goods movement, tourism and accommodate daily commuters. The following is a compilation of US 101 or 101 connecting projects that would achieve several state objectives:

## **Delivering Lifeline Route Projects**

### **Santa Barbara US 101 Multimodal Corridor - \$150 Million**

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments and Caltrans have partnered for over twenty years to deliver multimodal improvements between Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. Only two-and-a-half miles are left in completing the HOV lane network to promote carpooling and transit use, the continuation of interregional transit from Ventura County, peak hour passenger rail service, and completion of gaps on the California Coastal Trail to increase biking and walking. In 2017, the Thomas Fire (then the largest in state history) and Montecito mudslides underscored the importance of addressing this lifeline route.

### **US 101 San Luis Obispo Managed Lane Project - \$63 Million**

During peak hours, this project would convert a shoulder into a part-time managed lane in Pismo Beach to alleviate congestion and allow for greater transit reliability. The project would also improve operations on US 101 during weekday peak hours, summer/seasonal peak hours, and weekend peak traffic events; reduce traffic congestion and improve the traffic operations at the US 101/Avila Beach Drive interchange and improve access to multimodal transportation options; and provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities that serve all user types and abilities.

### **US 101 South of Salinas Safety Improvements - \$113 Million**

This south of Salinas project will create a new interchange, remove left turn movements, and construct a network of frontage roads to improve safety and facilitate goods movement on US 101 from the Abbott Street interchange south of the City of Salinas to the Chualar overcrossing in Monterey County. This segment of US 101 is currently a 4-lane expressway with 12 at-grade intersections, some acceleration lanes, some deceleration lanes, and numerous private driveways within the project limits. Trucks, cars, and farm equipment must turn left across two lanes of traffic, typically traveling 65-75 MPH to access homes, businesses, and farm properties served by county roads perpendicular to US 101.

This section of US 101 is vital to national, state, and local economies. In the Salinas Valley, the "Salad Bowl to the World," US 101 is a significant trade corridor for distributing fresh produce and wine grapes and wine to markets nationwide. The highway also serves as the primary route for low-income Latino farmworkers living in Chualar and south Monterey County to commute to jobs in the fields or hospitality jobs on the Monterey Peninsula.

## **Vital East-West Connector to US 101**

### **State Route 46 Overcrossing- Paso Robles - \$52.5 Million**

State Route 46 East has state, regional, and local significance because it is a heavily traveled goods movement and tourism corridor. The route connects the state to the two main north-south highways - US 101 and Highway 5 - and is the only major east-west goods movement corridor between Ventura and Gilroy (274 miles). The route supports the \$7 billion of annual goods shipments, accounting for 575,000 jobs in the region. SR 46 also supports the \$5 billion Central Coast tourism industry serving national and international travelers. The project would build an overcrossing allowing the city to create parallel local routes to remove local traffic off SR 46, making more room for commercial trucks. The state has invested nearly \$700 million in the corridor to eliminate head-on collisions on 46, which has experienced several fatal crashes that

exceed the state average. This project provides immediate safety and mobility enhancement for residents, tourists, and commuters while improving goods movement.

We appreciate all your effort in examining our request and look forward to working together to strengthen our economy, improve our transportation infrastructure, and address climate change. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jim Evans in the office of Assemblymember Addis at (916) 319-2030.

Sincerely,



DAWN ADDIS  
Chair, Central Coast Legislative Caucus  
Assemblymember, 30<sup>th</sup> District



MONIQUE LIMÓN  
Vice-Chair, Central Coast Legislative Caucus  
Senator, 19<sup>th</sup> District

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*The Central Coast Legislative Caucus*

**SENATORS**

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