



April 17, 2015
By E-Mail to:
ctp2040@dot.ca.gov

Gabriel Corley, Project Manager
Division of Planning, MS-32
Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 942874
Sacramento, CA 94274

Re: Comments on the California Transportation Plan 2040

Dear Mr. Corley:

The Train Riders Association of California has actively promoted passenger rail in California for the past thirty years. We co-sponsored Prop. 116, which was the source of much of the rail expansion of the last two decades. We commend Caltrans for the emphasis on non-auto modes in the California Transportation Plan 2040 and support it wholeheartedly.

TRAC believes that decisions to make major transportation investments, particularly costly and potentially transformative rail projects such as high-speed rail (HSR), must be based on their technical and economic merits and how well they serve the public interest. Too many projects have been designed to meet short-term political considerations and to serve as cash registers for narrow special interests such as consultants, contractors, developers, and landowners.

With that background, TRAC strongly supports the page 122 Long-Range Recommendation to "Target rail capital improvements that serve to integrate the network, that have system-wide benefits and that maximize the use of existing infrastructure capacity."

TRAC believes the public interest would be best served through the creation of a California Rail Commission, empowered to award funding to intercity and commuter rail projects. Composed of representatives of each rail operator or JPB whose service is connected to the national rail system, Commissioners would be motivated to fund the projects that most improve the state-wide rail network, because of the benefit of improved connectivity and ridership to their agency.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

/s/ RON JONES

Ron Jones, Executive Vice-President