California Transportation Commissioners
Via email: douglas.remedios@dot.ca.gov

May 1, 2013

Dear Commissioners,

Upcoming on May 7th you will be meeting in Los Angeles to decide on an additional funding allocation of $54 million for the over $200 million 6-mile Phase One two-lane Willits Bypass on Highway 101 in Mendocino County. The plan for the Willits Bypass will cost approximately quadruple that of equivalent highway construction, and is being built to move a mere 8,000 vehicles per day around the small town of Willits (pop. 5,000). This is an opportune time to have some of these hundreds of millions of dollars reallocated to higher priority transportation projects.

We are aware that the Los Angeles County Regional Transportation Authority and many others around the state have important highway funding needs. They are expected to either wait for years in line for their far higher priority projects or advance millions of dollars and hope for reimbursement under AB 3090 to accomplish their transportation needs.

The Caltrans proposal for the Willits Bypass was already denied funding by the California Transportation Commission in 2007. Since that time political lobbying has moved this ill-conceived project forward, though the price tag has steadily increased while regional traffic volumes have not. In fact, Phase Two Highway 101 Willits Bypass, if funded would cost another $100 million or more. At a total cost of over $300 million dollars for a minuscule traffic issue does not make good governance. Please see the Caltrans webcam just north of Willits on Highway 101: www.dot.ca.gov/dist1/dlstmc/l_cam.php?cam=27 There are only a few vehicles heading north, at most, and half of them would not use the Willits Bypass, since they are either coming from Willits, or Highway 20/Fort Bragg on the coast.
There is mounting opposition to the project including a lawsuit filed in Federal Court last year by the Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Club and local environmental groups. The bypass construction and mitigation would take over one thousand acres of farmland out of production, and local, State and Federal agencies are still working on mitigation issues for this sensitive wetland area in Little Lake Valley where endangered Coho, Chinook and Steelhead spawn. Recently, the Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman’s Associations and the Sherwood Valley Tribe have expressed opposition to the project.

We believe there are sound alternative proposals to improve traffic flow through the Willits Highway 101 corridor at significantly less cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for projects of demonstrably greater need in California. Voters and motorists deserve to have our limited transportation monies allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner.

We urge you to encourage these highway funding dollars which might be allocated to the Willits Bypass Project to be instead directed to much more worthy and necessary projects in other districts.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if further information on this issue would be helpful. Thank you.

Most sincerely,
Cynthia Raiser Jeavons
Save Little Lake Valley
5798 Ridgewood Road
Willits, California
(650) 888-9781

cc: Senator Noreen Evans
To whom it does concern.
Please do not fund the Willits Bypass Project. It is a waste of taxpayer’s money and will not relieve traffic congestion. Our population is falling, not growing. The money would be better used elsewhere: re-replacing the cheap bolts installed on the Golden Gate bridge.

Thank you for your time.
Ian.
Dear Sirs,
Thank-you for this opportunity to comment on the Willits Bypass.
I believe it is a waste of taxpayer's money. I'm sure there are much more deserving projects in more populated areas of the state. Our population is not increasing and our traffic flows are decreasing. 101 north of Willits is empty, even at times that should be rush hour.

Your action to de-fund the project 2 years ago was the right one. Please do not let this ill-conceived project go forward.
Thank-you,
Jamie Chevalier
707-459-9125
Dear Transport Commission,

Please do not fund the Willits Bypass Project. It is a waste of taxpayers' money and will not relieve traffic congestion. Our population is falling, not growing. I believe this money would be better used elsewhere.

Sincerely,

J. Castillo
May 2, 2013

California Transportation Commission
Mr. James Ghielmetti, Chair
Mr. Andre Boutros, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Remedios, Assistant Director

By Fax (916) 653-2134

Dear Gentlemen,

This Tuesday May 7, 2013 the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is considering the Willits Bypass (Agenda Item 132) to allocate an additional $31 million for project mitigation. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons:

Project is Unneeded

Population and traffic have remained flat over at least the past 20 years. Traffic volumes just north of Willits (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) have an annual average of 8,000 vehicles per day, with a peak hourly traffic heading north of 860 vehicles in one hour in the summer months. It was either the annual Harley Davidson Biker Run or Reggae on the River both located in Southern Humboldt County to the north. Please see the Caltrans webcam just north of Willits: www.dot.ca.gov/dist1/d11mpc/cam.php?cam=27. About half of the few vehicles that are heading north on an average day would not use the Willits Bypass, which has no interchange with Highway 20 to the west, since many vehicles are either coming from Willits, Brooktrails or from the Fort Bragg area on the coast.

Project is Wasteful

There are sound alternatives to improve traffic flow through the Willits Highway 101 corridor at significantly less cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for higher priority projects in California. Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. In fact, the Phase II Highway 101 Willits Bypass, if funded for the additional two lanes would cost another $100 million or more. California citizens and taxpayers deserve to have their funds go to the highest priority and most cost-effective transportation projects. Please do not fund this unneeded and wasteful project.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Signature]

Brian J Weller
24375 Birch Drive
Willits, CA 95490
May 2, 2013

California Transportation Commission (CTC)
Mr. James Ghielmetti, Chair
Mr. Andre Boutros, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Remondos, Assistant Director

Dear Sirs,
I am a resident of Willits, California. I wish to call your attention to an urgent matter on the May 7, 2013 CTC Agenda regarding the Willits Bypass (Agenda Item 132) allocating an additional $31 million for the project. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons.

(1) **The Project is Unnecessary.** The growth factors and traffic projections underlying Caltrans Bypass proposal are seriously flawed and out-dated. Traffic volumes have remained absolutely flat over at least the past 20 years. Population growth in this region is also nearly flat. Traffic volumes just north of Willits (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) average 8,000 vehicles per day. Even if we experienced some modest growth in population and traffic over the next 20 years, we would not reach volumes that justify a 4-lane freeway for many decades, if ever.

(2) **The Project Wastes Taxpayers Funds:** Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually-planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. After including interest on use of bond funding, the cost will be at least double. Factoring in likely 20% cost-overruns, the true cost is closer to a half billion dollars! For only a 2-lane half-a-freeway, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California. There are better ways to spend the funds than for an unneeded Bypass in the small town of Willits.

(3) **The Project is Destructive of Natural Resources:** The project will have irreversible adverse impacts on farmland, wetlands and unique and endangered habitats in Little Lake Valley. The project entails the largest wetland fill in northern California in over 50 years. It will install 55,000 “wick drains” to dewater and compact fill areas, with unknown impacts on valley hydrology, wells, and flooding. It puts 2,000 acres of farmland under Caltrans management, taking at least 400 acres out of production.

(4) **Better Alternatives Are Available:** We believe there are sound alternative proposals to improve traffic flow through the Willits Highway 101 corridor at significantly less cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for projects of demonstrably greater need in California. Voters, taxpayers and motorists deserve to have our limited transportation monies allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Freddie Long
24378 Birch Drive
Willits, CA 95490
FAX TO: California Transportation Commission (CTC) 416-653-2134

May 7, 2013

Mr. James Ghidemetti, Chair
Mr. Andre Boutros, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Remedios, Assistant Director

Dear Sirs,

I am a resident of Willits, California. I wish to call your attention to an urgent matter on the May 7, 2013 CTC Agenda regarding the Willits Bypass (Agenda Item 132) allocating an additional $31 million for the project. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons.

(1) **The Project is Unnecessary.** The growth factors and traffic projections underlying Caltrans Bypass proposal are seriously flawed and out-dated. Traffic volumes have remained absolutely flat over at least the past 20 years. Population growth in this region is also nearly flat. Traffic volumes just north of Willits (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) average 8,000 vehicles per day. Even if we experienced some modest growth in population and traffic over the next 20 years, we would not reach volumes that justify a 4-lane freeway for many decades, if ever.

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(4) **Better Alternatives Are Available.** We believe there are sound alternative proposals to improve traffic flow through the Willits Highway 101 corridor at significantly less cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for projects of demonstrably greater need in California. Voters, taxpayers and motorists deserve to have our limited transportation monies allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

5798 Rosewood Rd. Willits, CA 95490
Mr. James Ghielmetti, Chair
Mr. Andre Boutros, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Remedios, Assistant Director

Dear Sirs,
I am a resident of Willits, California. I wish to call your attention to an urgent matter on the May 7, 2013 CTC Agenda regarding the Willits Bypass (Agenda Item 132) allocating an additional $31 million for the project. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons:

1. **The Project is Unnecessary.** The growth factors and traffic projections underlying Caltrans Bypass proposal are seriously flawed and out-dated. Traffic volumes have remained absolutely flat over at least the past 20 years. Population growth in this region is also nearly flat. Traffic volumes just north of Willits (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) average 8,000 vehicles per day. Even if we experienced some modest growth in population and traffic over the next 20 years, we would not reach volumes that justify a 4-lane freeway for many decades, if ever.

2. **The Project Wastes Taxpayers Funds.** Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually-planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. After including interest on use of bond funding the cost will be at least double. Factoring in likely 20% cost-overruns, the true cost is closer to a half billion dollars! For only a 2-lane half-a-freeway, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California. There are better ways to spend the funds than for an unneeded Bypass in the small town of Willits.

3. **The Project is Destructive of Natural Resources.** The project will have irreversible adverse impacts on farmland, wetlands and unique and endangered habitats in Little Lake Valley. The project entails the largest wetland fill in northern California in over 50 years. It will install 55,000 “wick drains” to dewater and compact fill areas, with unknown impacts on valley hydrology, wells, and flooding. It puts 2,000 acres of farmland under Caltrans management, taking at least 400 acres out of production.

4. **Better Alternatives Are Available.** We believe there are sound alternative proposals to improve traffic flow through the Willits Highway 101 corridor at significantly less cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for projects of demonstrably greater need in California. Voters, taxpayers and motorists deserve to have our limited transportation monies allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Champion
1650 Daphne Dr
Willits, Ca, 95490
Mr. James Ghilmetti, Chair
Mr. Andre Boutros, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Remedios, Assistant Director

Dear Sirs,

I am a resident of Willits, California. I wish to call your attention to an urgent matter on the May 7, 2013 CTC Agenda regarding the Willits Bypass (Agenda Item 132) allocating an additional $31 million for the project. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons:

1. **The Project is Unnecessary.** The growth factors and traffic projections underlying Caltrans Bypass proposal are seriously flawed and out-dated. Traffic volumes have remained absolutely flat over at least the past 20 years. Population growth in this region is also nearly flat. Traffic volumes just north of Willits (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) average 8,000 vehicles per day. Even if we experienced some modest growth in population and traffic over the next 20 years, we would not reach volumes that justify a 4-lane freeway for many decades, if ever.

2. **The Project Wastes Taxpayers Funds:** Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually-planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. After including interest on use of bond funding, the cost will be at least double. Factoring in likely 20% cost-overruns, the true cost is closer to a half billion dollars! For only a 2-lane half-a-freeway, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California. There are better ways to spend the funds than for an unneeded Bypass in the small town of Willits.

3. **The Project is Destructive of Natural Resources:** The project will have irreversible adverse impacts on farmland, wetlands and unique and endangered habitats in Little Lake Valley. The project entails the largest wetland fill in northern California in over 50 years. It will install 55,000 "wick drains" to dewater and compact fill areas with unknown impacts on valley hydrology, wells, and flooding. It puts 2,000 acres of farmland under Caltrans management, taking at least 400 acres out of production.

4. **Better Alternatives Are Available:** We believe there are sound alternative proposals to improve traffic flow through the Willits Highway 101 corridor at significantly less cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for projects of demonstrably greater need in California. Voters, taxpayers and motorists deserve to have our limited transportation monies allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner.

Sincerely,

Eric Champion
1650 Daphne Dr
Willits, CA, 95490
On May 2 & 3, a delegation from Save Our Little Lake Valley, in Willits, California will travel to Sacramento to meet with elected officials and government agencies to enlist their help to stop the proposed Caltrans Willits Bypass project on California Highway 101. Traffic on Highway 101 through Willits has not met projected expectations.

Phase One of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. After including interest on use of bond funding, the cost could be at least double. Factoring in possible 20% cost-overruns, the true cost could be closer to a half billion dollars! For only a 2-lane half-a-freeway, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California.

Meanwhile, the State highway system has an estimated $300 billion shortfall for the transportation systems infrastructure maintenance and repairs.

I urge you to please take time to listen to the concerns of our community. There are alternative solutions that could better serve us and allow money to be used where it is really needed.

This project is potentially devastating to the Little Lake Valley environment. This valley was once a teeming wetland, home to migratory birds and salmon, Pomo villages, vast herds of Tule Elk and more. Much of the original wetland here in Willits valley has already been drained for ranching. California once had five million acres of wetlands and that number has dwindled to approximately 370,000. Now, Caltrans is asking for the largest wetlands fill permit to be issued in California in over fifty years. If the Caltrans project proceeds, 55,000 wick drains will be installed then covered by millions of cubic yards of fill, to drain an area which acts as a collection point for three critical anadromous creeks that flow through the valley. It is then drained by Outlet Creek, a tributary of the Eel River. Outlet Creek is an important spawning ground for steelhead, Chinook and Coho salmon and is the longest remaining run for these fish, in the state. This fishery is already endangered, please do not risk this valuable resource. This plan is outdated and unnecessary. Please help stop the Caltrans Willits Bypass.

Sincerely, Donna Schindel
May 1, 2013

California Transportation Commission
Mr. James Ghielmetti, Chair
Mr. Andre Boutros, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Remedios, Assistant Director

By Fax (916) 653-2134

Dear Gentlemen,

This Tuesday May 7, 2013 the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is considering the Willits Bypass (Agenda Item 132) to allocate an additional $31 million for project mitigation. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons:

Project is Unneeded

Population and traffic have remained flat over at least the past 20 years. Traffic volumes just north of Willits (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) have an annual average of 8,000 vehicles per day, with a peak hourly traffic heading north of 860 vehicles in one hour in the summer months. It was either the annual Harley Davidson Biker Run or Reggae on the River both located in Southern Humboldt County to the north. Please see the Caltrans webcam just north of Willits: www.dot.ca.gov/dist1/d1tmc/1_cam.php?cam=27

About half of the few vehicles that are heading north on an average day would not use the Willits Bypass, which has no interchange with Highway 20 to the west, since many vehicles are either coming from Willits, Brooktrails or from the Fort Bragg area on the coast.

Project is Wasteful

There are sound alternatives to improve traffic flow through the Willits Highway 101 corridor at significantly less cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for higher priority projects in California. Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. In fact, the Phase II Highway 101 Willits Bypass, if funded for the additional two lanes would cost another $100 million or more.

California citizens and taxpayers deserve to have their funds go to the highest priority and most cost-effective transportation projects. Please do not fund this unneeded and wasteful project. Thank you for you consideration.

Sincerely,

Bob Whitney

Bob Whitney

(707) 459-3906
23801 Iris Terrace
Brooktrails Township, CA 95490
Mr. James Chilton, Chair
Mr. Andre Benzon, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Benson, Assistant Director

Dear Sirs,

I am a resident of Wilton, California. I wish to call your attention to an urgent matter on the May 7, 2013 CTC Agenda regarding the Wilton bypass (Agenda Item 13) allocating an additional $1 million for the project. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons:

1. The Project is Unnecessary. The growth factors and traffic projections underlying Caltrans' bypass proposal are seriously flawed and outdated. Traffic volumes have grown absolutely the past 15 years. Population growth in the region is also entirely flat. Traffic volumes just north of Wilton (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) average 8,000 vehicles per day. Even if we experience some modest growth in population and traffic over the next 20 years, we would not reach volumes that justify a four-lane freeway for many decades, if ever.

2. The Project Wastes Unnecessary Money. Phase I of the proposed project, which includes only two lanes of the eventually-planned four-lane freeway, is slated to cost $20 million. After including interest on the cost of bond financing, the cost will be at least double. Factoring in likely 20% cost overruns, the true cost is close to a half billion dollars! For only a 2-lane half-a-metre, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California. There are better ways to spend the funds for an unneeded bypass in the small town of Wilton.

3. The Project Destroys Natural Resources. The project will have irreversible adverse impacts on farmland, wetlands and unique and endangered habitat in Little Lake Valley. The project entails the largest wetland fill in northern California in over 30 years. It will instill 50,000 "rock dunes" to divert and compact fill areas, with unknown impacts on valley hydrology, wells, and flooding. It puts 2,000 acres of farmland under Caltrans' management, taking at least 100 acres out of production.

4. Better Alternatives Are Available. We believe there are sound alternative proposals to improve traffic flow through the Wilton Highway; but consider at significantly lower cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for projects of demonstrably greater need in California. Voters, taxpayers, and residents deserve to have our limited transportation dollars allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner.

Sincerely, Jane Hernandez, film and video producer

[Signature]

RECD BY CTC
Dear Sirs,  

I am a resident of Willits, California. I wish to call your attention to an urgent matter on the May 7, 2013 CTC Agenda regarding the Willits Bypass (Agenda Item 132) allocating an additional $31 million for the project. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons.

(1) The Project is Unnecessary. The growth factors and traffic projections underlying Caltrans Bypass proposal are seriously flawed and out-dated. Traffic volumes have remained absolutely flat over at least the past 20 years. Population growth in this region is also nearly flat. Traffic volumes just north of Willits (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) average 8,000 vehicles per day. Even if we experienced some modest growth in population and traffic over the next 20 years, we would not reach volumes that justify a 4-lane freeway for many decades, if ever.

(2) The Project Wastes Taxpayers Funds: Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually-planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. After including interest on use of bond funding, the cost will be at least double. Factoring in likely 20% cost-overruns, the true cost is closer to a half billion dollars! For only a 2-lane half-a-freeway, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California. There are better ways to spend the funds than for an unneeded Bypass in the small town of Willits.

(3) The Project is Destructive of Natural Resources: The project will have irreversible adverse impacts on farmland, wetlands and
unique and endangered habitats in Little Lake Valley. The project entails the largest wetland fill in northern California in over 50 years. It will install 55,000 “wick drains” to dewater and compact fill areas, with unknown impacts on valley hydrology, wells, and flooding. It puts 2,000 acres of farmland under Caltrans management, taking at least 400 acres out of production.

(4) Better Alternatives Are Available:. We believe there are sound alternative proposals to improve traffic flow through the Willits Highway 101 corridor at significantly less cost, freeing up the bulk of transportation funding for projects of demonstrably greater need in California. Voters, taxpayers and motorists deserve to have our limited transportation monies allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner.

Sincerely, Kate Black, Physician Assistant – Family Medicine

KateBlack PA, CAE, NCCA
Dear Sirs,

I am a resident of Wilton, California. I write to call your attention to an urgent matter on the May 7, 2013 CTC Agenda regarding the Wilton Bypass (Agenda Item 131) allocating an additional $11 million for the project. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons:

(1) The Project is Unnecessary. The growth rates and traffic projections underlying Caltrans Bypass proposal are actually flawed and out-of-date. Traffic volumes have remained absolutely flat over at least the past 20 years. Population growth in this region is also steady flat. Traffic volumes just south of Wilton (which will continue to be heavily-I-5 based) on a two-lane highway average 5,000 vehicles per day. Even if we experience some modest growth in population and traffic over the next 20 years, we would not reach volumes that justify a 4-lane freeway for many decades, if ever.

(2) The Project Would Deplete Funds. Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the originally-planned 4-lane freeway, is priced to cost $1.4 billion. After excluding interest on costs, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California. There are other ways to spend the funds than for an unneeded Bypass in the small town of Wilton.

(3) The Project is Destabilizing to Natural Resources. The project will have irreversible adverse impacts on floodplain, wetlands and unique and endangered habitats in Little Lake Valley. The project entails the evacuation of floodfill in northern California in over 50 years. It will result in significant loss of irreplaceable valley resources, with unknown impacts on valley hydrology, wetlands, and floodplains. It will reduce the floodplain and exacerbate flood risk, with unknown impacts on valley hydrology, wetlands, and floodplains.

(4) Better Alternatives Are Available. We believe there are several alternative proposals to improve traffic flow through the Wilton/Highway 101 corridor that significantly less cost, drawing upon the lack of transportation funding for projects of comparable or greater need in California. Voters, taxpayers and motorists deserve to have our limited transportation monies allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
May 1, 2013

California Transportation Commission
Mr. James Ghielmetti, Chair
Mr. Andre Boutris, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Remedios, Assistant Director

By Fax to 916 653 2134

RE: Agenda Item #132

Sirs,

On Tuesday May 7, 2013 the CTC will consider whether or not to approve an additional $31 million dollars ($) for mitigation associated with Caltrans Willits Bypass project, Agenda Item 132. I am a resident of Willits, and I wish to call your attention to some of the numerous reasons why this allocation should not be approved.

1) The Project is Unnecessary.

   Growth factors and traffic projections underlying Caltrans Bypass proposal are outdated; traffic volumes and population growth has not increased, but have remained flat for the past 20 years.

   Traffic volume on route 101 is currently adequately handled on a two-lane highway. There are no back-ups north or south of Willits. Even with moderate growth, a four-lane Freeway would not be needed for decades.

   The current backup of traffic at the railroad crossing in central Willits can easily be addressed with an inexpensive restriping of existing traffic lanes.

   A business or truck route such as that serving the City of Eureka would better serve our needs. Such a plan would involve no loss of housing, no environmental mitigation, and cost much less than the current plan.

2) The Project Wastes Taxpayers Funds.

   As currently envisioned, Caltrans plans to build a four-lane bypass around the town of Willits, destroying much needed agricultural land, wetland headwaters, and extremely sensitive natural habitat. The design is much larger than needed.

   Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually-planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. After including interest on use of bond funding, the cost will be at least double. Factoring in likely 20% cost-overruns, the true cost is closer to a half billion dollars! For only a 2-lane half-a-freeway, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California. There are better ways to spend the funds than for an unneeded Bypass in the small town of Willits.

3) The Project is Unnecessarily Destructive of Natural Resources:

   The project entails the largest wetland fill in northern California in over 50 years! It will have irreversibly adverse impacts on farmland, wetlands and unique and endangered habitats in Little Lake Valley.

   Among other problems, CalTrans plans to install 55,000 "wick drains" to dewater and compact fill areas, with unknown impacts on valley hydrology, wells, and flooding. This area is a headwater for the Eel River, which harbors salmon and other fish and wildlife deemed important to California's economy.
In addition, CalTrans tells us that the citizens of Willits and the flora and fauna of the surrounding area will be subject to 3 years (!) of pile-driving 24/7! The impact of these constant vibrations alone will be devastating to the health of the people, livestock, and wildlife in the area.

Further, as currently designed, the project puts 2,000 acres of vital farmland under CalTrans management, acreage that our economy needs to grow and prosper.

4) **Much Better and Less Expensive Alternatives Are Available.**

A business or truck route such as that serving the City of Eureka would better serve our needs. Such a plan has been designed and is available. It would follow existing railroad rights-of-way and would involve no loss of housing, and no environmental mitigation, as it makes use of land that is already available. Such an approach would certainly cost much less than the current plan, freeing up $30 million dollars of transportation funding for projects of demonstrably greater need in California.

Voters, taxpayers and motorists deserve to have our limited transportation monies allocated where the need is greatest, and in a responsible manner. Please reign in CalTrans and stop this juggernaut before any more damage can be done.

Please please do not fund this project.

Thank you for your consideration of the matter.

Yours truly,

Bethellen Levitan
TO: California Transportation Commission (CTC)
Mr. James Ghienett, Chair
Mr. Andre Boutros, Executive Director
Mr. Douglas Remedios, Assistant Director

Dear Sirs,
I am not a resident of Willits, California but I wish to call your attention to an urgent matter on the May 7, 2013 CTC Agenda regarding the Willits Bypass (Agenda Item 132) allocating an additional $31 million for the project. This money should not be allocated for the following reasons.

(1) The Project is Unnecessary. The growth factors and traffic projections underlying Caltrans Bypass proposal are seriously flawed and out-dated. Traffic volumes have remained absolutely flat over at least the past 20 years. Population growth in this region is also nearly flat. Traffic volumes just north of Willits (which will continue to be adequately handled on a two-lane highway) average 8,000 vehicles per day. Even if we experienced some modest growth in population and traffic over the next 20 years, we would not reach volumes that justify a 4-lane freeway for many decades, if ever.

(2) The Project Wastes Taxpayers Funds; Phase I of this proposed project, which completes only two lanes of the eventually-planned 4-lane freeway, is slated to cost $210 million. After including interest on use of bond funding, the cost will be at least double. Factoring in likely 20% cost-overruns, the true cost is closer to a half billion dollars! For only a 2-lane half-a-freeway, the cost per mile is estimated to be about four times the cost of average freeways elsewhere in California. There are better ways to spend the funds than for an unneeded Bypass in the small town of Willits.

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Virginia Jaquez
PO Box 172
Greenville, CA 95947