

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

May 3, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

As members of the Orange County Congressional Delegation, we write in support of the Orange County Transportation Authority's Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan request for the Interstate 405 Improvement Project (Project). This Project will increase capacity along this busy corridor by widening the freeway and improving 16 miles of I-405 between the State Route 73 in Costa Mesa and Interstate 605 near the Los Angeles County line.

The Project includes adding one general purpose lane in each direction from Euclid Street to I-605 and making improvements to freeway entrances, exits and bridges. It also will construct the 405 Express Lanes, two lanes in each direction from SR-73 to I-605. The new express lanes – incorporating the existing carpool lanes and connectors that opened in 2014 – will give solo drivers the choice to speed up their commute for a toll, and carpoolers will ride free or at a discounted rate pending the results of the project traffic and revenue study.

The general purpose lane portion of the project is a Measure M (Orange County's half-cent transportation sales tax) project and will be funded by a combination of these voter-authorized tax dollars, as well as state and federal funds. The express lanes portion of the project will be financed and primarily paid for by those who choose to pay a toll and use the 405 Express Lanes.

Madam Secretary, these improvements are vital to this major transportation corridor. Built in the 1960s, the freeway carries between 257,000 and 370,000 vehicles per day depending on location. Near the Los Angeles County line, the I-405 is the most heavily traveled freeway in the nation and both the regular lanes and carpool lanes are congested daily during rush hour and on weekends. It is expected that by 2040 it will take a commuter two hours and 13 minutes to travel this 16 mile stretch of freeway in the general purpose lane if these improvements are not made. However, with these improvements the travel time will be decreased to only 29 minutes. The express lanes portion of the freeway would improve travel times even more dramatically by decreasing the anticipated time from 121 minutes down to 13 minutes.

The TIFIA loan is an important component to the successful completion of this important Project. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



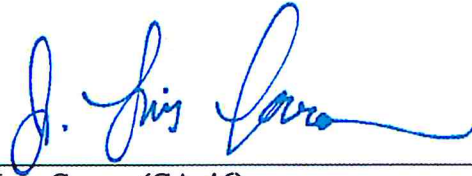
Dana Rohrabacher (CA-48)
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal (CA-47)
Member of Congress



Mimi Walters (CA-45)
Member of Congress



Lou Correa (CA-46)
Member of Congress



Ed Royce (CA-39)
Member of Congress



Darrell Issa (CA-49)
Member of Congress