



San Joaquin
Joint Powers Authority

Bill Bronte
Chief, Division of Rail
California Department of Transportation
1120 N Street, MS-74
P.O. Box 942874
Sacramento, CA 95814-5680

March 22, 2013

Regarding: Comments on Draft CA State Rail Plan

John Pedrozo, Chair
Merced County
Board of Supervisors,
Merced County
Association of Governments

Henry Perea, Vice-Chair
Fresno County
Board of Supervisors,
Fresno Council of Governments

Steve Cohn, Vice-Chair
City of Sacramento
City Council,
Sacramento Regional Transit

Vito Chiesa
Stanislaus County
Board of Supervisors,
Stanislaus Council
of Governments

Scott Haggerty
Alameda County
Board of Supervisors

Allen Ishida
Tulare County
Board of Supervisors,
Tulare County
Association of Governments

Bob Johnson
City of Lodi
City Council,
San Joaquin
Regional Rail Commission

Don Tatzin
City of Lafayette
City Council,
Contra Costa
Transportation Authority

Tom Wheeler
Madera County
Board of Supervisors,
Madera County
Transportation Commission

Dear Mr. Bronte:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft State Rail Plan. The San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA) is a strong supporter of the San Joaquin intercity passenger rail service and improving rail transportation in California. We believe that the State Rail Plan is important to the future of rail transportation in California and we appreciate Caltrans' efforts to produce this draft plan. We look forward to continuing to work with Caltrans on this, and future planning processes, towards implementing improved rail service in California.

Of the three state-supported intercity services, the San Joaquin service has the most critical role for supporting the phased implementation of high-speed rail. We appreciate that the Draft State Rail Plan explains that not enough planning has been completed to include capital projects necessary for integrated conventional intercity, HSR and commuter rail for the San Joaquin Route (Section 8.2.3). We request that Caltrans work with us on the development of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the San Joaquin rail service, which will be the first formal planning document to examine this in detail.

We strongly support the Draft State Rail Plan's conclusion that "Additional work will be needed to determine the appropriate number of San Joaquin trains that would use the first construction section of the IOS and the BNSF line during the interim period until HSR begins to operate on the IOS..." (page 217). We look forward to working in partnership with Caltrans and the CHSRA to help determine what is best for the state and for the San Joaquin Corridor.

The SJJPA and local and regional agencies throughout the San Joaquin Corridor strongly support continuing San Joaquin intercity passenger rail service along the entire existing San Joaquin alignment. Working with the SJJPA and local and regional partners, the state needs to investigate ways to have the San Joaquin service complement and act as a "feeder" service to the future "express" high-speed rail service. The ridership forecasts presented in Chapter 10 should be changed to show continued San Joaquin service from Merced to Bakersfield.

(Table 10.1 shows "0" trains via the San Joaquin Route from Oakland to Bakersfield and from Sacramento to Bakersfield in 2025 and 2040). This is in conflict with the text for "Network and Service Characteristics" of the Draft State Rail Plan which states, "In the long term (after the initiation of electrified high-speed rail service in the San Joaquin Valley), San Joaquin trains will

be operated along conventional lines down to Bakersfield" (Chapter 10, page 300). While the SJJPA appreciates that the Draft State Rail Plan is clear that it is premature to make decisions regarding the future utility of the San Joaquin rail service south of Merced, unfortunately Table 10.1 gives the wrong impression that the state (Caltrans/CHSRA) believes the San Joaquin Rail service south of Merced should be eliminated. In addition, for the San Joaquin Route, Table 10.1 has rows titled "Oakland-Merced HSR via the San Joaquin Route, Stockton-Merced HSR via San Joaquin Route, and Sacramento-Merced HSR"; it appears that "HSR" should be deleted from the titles of these rows.

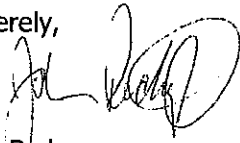
Chapter 10 states, "the ridership and revenue forecasts were prepared for baseline and planned service scenarios in 2020, 2025 and 2040" (page 297). However, the train frequencies for the San Joaquin Route as well as many of the other existing rail services for 2040 are the same as shown for 2025. The "Network and Service Characteristics" section of Chapter 10 should explain why no growth was assumed for these services between 2025 and 2040. This section should also clarify that the train frequencies for the ridership and revenue forecasts do not correlate to the improvements listed in Chapter 8.

For the ridership forecasts, Table 10.1 shows 2-5 round trips from Sacramento to Bakersfield in 2020, and 10 round-trips between Sacramento and Merced for 2025 and 2040. However, Table 8.9 "San Joaquin Route Capital Investments" has no improvements shown between Sacramento and Stockton. The SJJPA understands that double-tracking the UPRR Fresno Subdivision between Fresno and Sacramento is included as part of the San Joaquin Program EIR. The SJJPA believes that the cost for double-tracking the UPRR Fresno Subdivision from Stockton to Sacramento should be included in Table 8.9. Considerable improvement of the UPRR Fresno Subdivision will be necessary to significantly increase the frequency of intercity passenger service to Sacramento.

Chapter 2 identifies the "San Joaquin Valley" as one of the three general regions that future economic growth will be "increasingly concentrated in" (page 24). In the same section it states, "this regional economic concentration also will be reflected in California's five busiest interregional travel corridors in 2030". Yet for this list of busiest interregional travel corridors, the San Joaquin Valley has been split into two regions. The San Joaquin Valley should be treated as one region throughout this section (like the Central Coast is depicted) and therefore "San Francisco Bay Area to/from the San Joaquin Valley" should be the third busiest interregional travel corridor with 66.5 million annual person trips, and the "Los Angeles Basin to/from San Joaquin Valley" should be fifth with 52.7 million.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on the Draft State Rail Plan.

Sincerely,



John Pedrozo
Chairperson
San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority