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October 20, 2011

Ray LaHood, Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**Subject: Stanislaus County Kiernan Interchange Application**

Dear Secretary LaHood:

The eight-county San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council is pleased to provide our support for the Kiernan Interchange project in Stanislaus County. This exceptional and regionally significant project is under consideration for TIGER III program funding. As you know, the San Joaquin Valley is an important contributor of agricultural goods and products to the nation, and global economy. We are highly dependent on a road, rail and port transportation network that promotes efficient goods movement, as well as long-term economic stability.

The Kiernan Interchange project is needed to manage growth in the region. Land use and job projections within the area of the project are anticipated to grow from 115,500 jobs in 2020 to 169,000 in 2050. Left unmanaged this growth will increase traffic congestion and delay, cause inefficient energy use, deteriorate air quality and result in increased traffic accidents. The project is needed to manage existing operational deficiencies by providing additional interchange capacity that will accommodate growth forecasts, including new jobs and traffic projections. The project will provide the following benefits:

- Provide a high capacity interchange connecting SR 99 to SR 219
- Eliminate congestion on SR 219 at the existing SR 99 Interchange
- Increase the efficiency of the interchange to allow traffic on SR 99 to flow at an improved level of service
- Improve the flow of goods and services for the region and the State and provide the catalyst for regional and local generation of jobs
- Improve traffic operations on adjacent roadway network
- Leverage additional benefits from the State's investment on SR 219

The Stanislaus County Kiernan Interchange project has been selected by the eight Regional Transportation Planning Agencies of the Valley, and endorsed by the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, as a project that meets the TIGER III program criteria for long-term benefits for the Nation, and near term economic activity and job creation, especially for our severely economically distressed region.

Thank you for allowing us to provide our input and support to the TIGER III program. The program has been a tremendous success and we welcome your

continued commitment to the San Joaquin Valley. Should you need any additional information, please contact me at 559.636.5000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allen Ishida".

Allen Ishida,  
Supervisor, Tulare County  
Chairman, San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council