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February 14, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

### **In Support of the Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project Full Funding Grant Agreement**

Dear Secretary Chao,

The National Association of Railroad Passengers would like to communicate our support for Caltrain's Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project (PCEP), and we encourage the Federal Transit Administration to move ahead with the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) that is currently pending approval.

First identified almost twenty years ago in the 1999 Caltrain Strategic Plans, this long-overdue project will expand capacity on this crowded corridor, which currently features trains operating at 125% capacity during peak hours. Over 65,000 commuters depend on the Peninsula Corridor every day, and the service provides a critical alternative to the heavily congested U.S. 101 freeway. Modernizing the current diesel-based service is a cost-effective way to deliver more efficient, faster, and more frequent rail service to the region.

Given the Trump Administration's emphasis on jobs and strengthening domestic manufacturing, it's no exaggeration to label this a "project of national significance." The Caltrain Modernization Program is expected to create over 9,600 total direct and indirect jobs, and is the motive force for the construction of a new railcar assembly plant in Salt Lake City, which will generate sustainable, family-wage jobs for 550 employees. This project, in conjunction with strong Buy America provisions, is an important step in the revitalization of the growing U.S. railcar manufacturing sector.

NARP is asking for the FTA to advance an FFGA as quickly as possible. Caltrain has warned that if the agency is unable to issue a Notice to Proceed (NTP) to contractors by March 1, 2017, this vital project will see cost overruns, eroding the project's viability. Advancing PCEP will create jobs and fuel the national economy, and we trust we can count on your support for this critical transportation investment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Mathews", is written over a light gray background.

Jim Mathews, President & CEO

National Association of Railroad Passengers

