



March 22, 2022

The Honorable Alfredo Pedroza, Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale Street
San Francisco CA 94105-2066

RE: Valley Link in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Regional Grant Strategy as a Project Priority for the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program

Dear Chair Pedroza:

On behalf of the East Bay Leadership Council, a regional public policy and advocacy organization representing hundreds of employers across Contra Costa and Alameda Counties, I am writing to strongly support the inclusion of the Valley Link rail transit project in the MTC's BIL Regional Grant Strategy as a project priority for the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program. We believe that Valley Link is a vital element of the robust and sustainable passenger rail system we need and essential to the future of our region.

Valley Link has widespread support from all sectors of the Northern California Megaregion, is identified in MTC's Plan Bay Area 2050 (2021-2035 delivery period) and at project inception has an unprecedented 1/3 of its funding already identified as available through local sources - a total of over \$700 million. Consistent with MTC's Equity Priority Communities Framework and the Biden Administration's new Justice40 Initiative, Valley Link will also achieve near-term mobility, accessibility, environmental, and health benefit for the more than 100,500 Bay Area workers now commuting daily from their homes in the Northern San Joaquin Valley - a region recognized as one of the State's largest areas of California Climate Investments Priority Populations for both State designated disadvantage communities and low-income communities.

Valley Link provides critical statewide rail connectivity closing the gap between BART and the state rail system - linking nearly 500 miles of commuter and intercity rail with more than 130 stations throughout the Northern California Megaregion. As such, Valley Link will bring tens of thousands of riders daily to other transit systems in the Bay Area significantly increasing transit ridership within the region. Valley Link improvements are critical for the equitable and sustainable future of the Bay Area and the megaregion it is intrinsically a part of. We urge you to include this transformational project in the BIL Regional Grant Strategy as a project priority for the CIG Program.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristin Connelly".

Kristin Connelly
President & CEO

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