



**Santa Barbara County  
Air Pollution Control District**

Our Vision  Clean Air

December 21, 2017

The Honorable Brian P. Kelly, Secretary  
California State Transportation Agency  
915 Capitol Mall, Suite 350B  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for SBCAG Application for 2017 TIRCP Grant Funding

Dear Mr. Kelly,

As Director of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, I strongly support the grant application submitted by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) for the 2018 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) that would support fleet expansion and facility improvements to enable expanded electric-powered Coastal Express bus service. The District is a strong supporter of efforts to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) and smog-forming nitrogen oxides (NOx) in the region. Moving towards zero emission transit vehicles, especially those used in long distance transit services, can result in a dramatic reduction in GHG and NOx emissions.

The Coastal Express, funded jointly by SBCAG and the Ventura County Transportation Commission is an exceptionally successful commuter transit service, with a high farebox and a record of eliminating millions of vehicle miles travelled (VMTs) every year. Using battery-powered long distance coaches in this service could easily result not just in lower GHG and NOx emissions, but a true carbon-negative transportation program.

The nature of the Coastal Express service lends itself well to electric coaches. This grant would enable SBCAG and its partners to purchase electric buses, develop the facility improvements necessary to operate the service, and support planned peak hour Pacific Surfliner rail service with express long distance bus service that will allow commuters to move seamlessly between regional bus service and intercity rail service for their transportation using an integrated system.

To support the state's critical goal of reducing GHGs, and smog-forming pollutants, as well as demonstrate leadership in the technical application of emerging zero-emission public transportation options, I strongly encourage the California State Transportation Agency to support SBCAG's 2017 TIRCP grant application.

Sincerely,

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Director