



Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority

4900 Rivergrade Rd. Ste. A120 Irwindale, CA 91706 (626) 962-9292 fax (626) 962-3552 www.theaceproject.org

Contact: Paul Hubler
ACE Construction Authority
(626) 962-9292

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 1, 2013

Board Members

Norma Macias
Chair
City of El Monte

Jack Hadjinian
Vice Chair
City of Montebello

Michael Antonovich
Los Angeles County

Don Knabe
Los Angeles County

Gloria Molina
Los Angeles County

Tim Spohn
City of Industry

Elliott Rothman
City of Pomona

Juli Costanzo
City of San Gabriel

Barbara Messina
SGVCOG

Paul Eaton
Ex-Officio
SANBAG

Mark Christoffels
Chief Executive Officer

CONGRESSIONAL PANEL CALLS FOR INCREASED FEDERAL FUNDING FOR FREIGHT PROJECTS

Alameda Corridor-East called out as critical mega-project

A bipartisan Congressional freight panel report released this week includes the recommendation that Congress provide robust public investment in freight projects, including dedicated funding for a program to provide grants to nationally significant freight projects across the country, such as the ACE roadway grade separation projects. The recommendations came in a report released by an 11-member panel of the House Transportation Committee after six months of research and visits to the nation's leading trade gateways and corridors.

"We applaud the freight panel's excellent work and truly appreciate the bipartisan recommendation to provide dedicated federal funding for nationally and regionally significant freight mega-projects such as the ACE projects," said Mark Christoffels, Chief Executive Officer of the ACE Construction Authority. Members of the freight panel visited Southern California in late May and received recommendations and freight project updates, including regarding the ACE projects.

Specifically, the panel recommends that Congress and the Administration:

- Establish a comprehensive national freight transportation policy and designate a multimodal national freight network which includes all transport modes;
- Ensure robust public funding to maintain and improve the condition and performance of the freight network and provide incentives for private investment;
- Authorize dedicated funding for the Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) grant program, a significant source of funding for the ACE projects and other critical freight mega-projects, and establish clear benchmarks for project selection;
- Expedite freight project development and delivery; and,
- Identify freight funding and revenue recommendations.

The ACE projects, along with the CREATE passenger-freight rail projects near Chicago and the Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project near New York, were cited by the panel's ranking Democrat, Congressman Jerrold Nadler of New

MORE—MORE—MORE

York, as key mega-projects developed to address major freight bottlenecks and congestion and intended to be funded through the PNRS program as originally authorized by Congress in 2005.

“During the panel’s deliberations, we had the opportunity to see several projects of national significance firsthand,” said Congressman Nadler, a strong supporter of the PNRS program. “I am pleased that the panel recognizes the specific need to authorize guaranteed funding for these critical freight projects, which often face significant hurdles securing funding under current federal-aid highway programs.” Congressman Nadler made his remarks during a press conference held Tuesday to release the panel’s report.

With the current federal transportation bill, MAP-21, set to expire on October 1, 2014, the panel’s recommendations are intended to guide lawmakers as they begin to draft legislation to reauthorize federal transportation programs and funding. Congresswoman Janice Hahn and Congressman Gary Miller were among the members of the panel from Southern California. The panel’s recommendations are supported by the Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Congressman Bill Shuster of Pennsylvania, and its ranking Democrat, Congressman Nick Rahall of West Virginia.

The 282-mile ACE Trade Corridor as defined in federal legislation encompasses the freight rail mainlines through Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties which carry trade from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, the nation’s busiest container ports, to the rest of the nation. Regional agencies have identified 131 potential rail-roadway grade separations along the four-county corridor at a cost of \$4.6 billion in 2006 dollars.

Port traffic results in up to 100 freight trains a day using the transcontinental rail network through Southern California, with more than 90 percent of these trains heading east. By 2025, freight train counts are projected to increase to 250 trains per day along the BNSF and Union Pacific mainline rail network, according to a study conducted for the Southern California Association of Governments.

The ACE Construction Authority is charged with constructing rail-roadway grade separation projects at 22 crossings along the freight rail mainlines in the San Gabriel Valley as well as safety improvements at the remaining grade crossings. Although prior federal transportation bills provided a significant funding catalyst for the ACE Construction Authority program, the current overall federal share of the \$1.7 billion program in the San Gabriel Valley has since declined to less than 15 percent with a current program funding shortfall of \$165 million. In the San Gabriel Valley, studies have shown that without the ACE Program, traffic delays at rail-highway crossings would increase by 300 percent.

END—END—END