



FARM BUREAU

September 22, 2010

Chairman Tom Wheeler
Madera County Board of Supervisors
200 W. Fourth Street
Madera, CA 93637

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Executive Director

**RE: Addition of Hwy 152 Alignment to High Speed Rail
Oppose Western Chowchilla Design Option**

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

As you know, the Madera County Farm Bureau (MCFB) is deeply involved at the local and state level in route selection for the California High Speed Rail (CHSR) project. In most recent months, we have focused on the proposed alternatives for the East-West corridor, which links the Bay Area section of track with the Merced to Fresno section.

We respectfully request that the Madera Board of Supervisors require that the Hwy 152 alignment is added as an additional alternative for the East-West corridor. We encourage your Board to ask the High Speed Rail Authority to adhere to the existing transportation corridor at Hwy 152, and to propose a redesign option of the interchange at Hwy 152/Hwy 99, if necessary to accommodate a high speed train.

We understand that the modification and/or additional construction and design necessary to make this Hwy 152 alignment viable are unattractive to high speed rail staff due to increased costs and design challenges.

However, we submit that Madera County is asked by the High Speed Rail Authority to be disproportionately generous when it comes to the absorption of impacts for the construction of this project. Our county will not benefit from a rail stop, yet will accommodate the connecting "Y" for the system, thereby requiring large land forfeitures by the community as a whole. As our county grows in population and vehicle traffic, Madera will be hard pressed to find the resources to mitigate increased demand for our highway system. Furthermore, Madera will surely feel the traffic impacts of constituents leaving our county to ride the high speed train. This is an opportunity to update our current system.

The MCFB Board of Directors has taken a position of opposition to both the Avenue 21 and Avenue 24 East-West corridor alternatives. We ask that you refrain from endorsing either of these proposed routes and instead request that Hwy 152 is studied for this section. For reasons of disruption of farming activities and the displacement of several businesses and home sites, these proposed routes remain undesirable for landowners along these avenues. This position of opposition has been recorded by high speed rail staff and was included in their presentation to the High Speed Rail Authority on August 5, 2010.

Additionally, MCFB opposes the currently proposed Western Chowchilla Design Option. This alternative does not follow existing property lines and will be financially

Madera County Farm Bureau

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devastating to landowners by devaluing their properties. Local banking institutions have indicated that severance of farm properties will trigger mandatory appraisals. Appraisers have guaranteed that this situation will require loan modification due to a reduction in assets necessary to make loans to family farms.

We remain in support of Route Alternative A-2 (Hwy 99). We oppose Route Alternative A-1 (BNSF), as it requires 20 miles of additional track, thereby creating a new transportation corridor. The reasons for these positions have been explained in writing and on the record at many Madera Board of Supervisors hearings.

We thank you for attention to this request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Erickson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

JIM ERICKSON
President
Board of Directors

Cc: Madera Board of Supervisors
Madera County Farm Bureau Board of Directors
Raymond Beach, Madera County Resource Management Agency
Norman Allinder, Madera County Resource Management Agency