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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

April 14, 2014

Chairperson Fred Strong
LOSSAN Joint Powers Authority
Pacific Surfliner Intercity Rail Service
1000 Spring Street
Paso Robles CA 93446

Subject: California Intercity Passenger Rail Program

Dear Chair Strong,

The County of Santa Barbara strongly supports the California Intercity Passenger Rail Program. With the Pacific Surfliner serving five rail stations in the county, including the very popular Santa Barbara station, over 350,000 people use state-supported rail service in the county every year, greatly benefiting residents, visitors, businesses, and educational and other organizations in the county. Intercity rail service is an environmentally responsible transportation alternative that reduces congestion on the state highway system and offers an excellent return on the state's investment in connecting the urban areas in the state to one another.

California leads the country in funding and operating intercity rail service, with three of the five busiest rail corridors in the nation operating in California—the Pacific Surfliner, the Capital Corridor, and the San Joaquin. With these three services carrying over five million passengers every year, 20% of all rail passengers in the nation board a train in California. The state's Intercity Passenger Rail Program not only lowers the demand on our major highways, but also increases safety and the productivity of the traveling public.

With the implementation of federal legislation in 2013 that eliminated federal funding for intercity rail services less than 750 miles in length, continued state support for the three rail services is of paramount importance. Even at current service levels, customers must stand on many trains, so expansion of all three services as identified in the 2013 State Rail Plan is critical.

As someone who has personally experienced the benefit of traveling on the Pacific Surfliner, I can attest to the effectiveness and attraction of traveling by train. The County of Santa Barbara encourages you to build upon the state's investment in rail infrastructure and work to expand and enhance all three state supported rail corridors.

Sincerely,

Steve Lavagnino, Chair