

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 25, 2008

Pam O'Connor
Chair
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

Dear Ms. O'Connor:

As Members of Congress who represent Gold Line Foothill Extension communities, we write in strong support of its inclusion in the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as a budgeted project for both operations and capital expenses.

The Gold Line Foothill Extension is a 24 mile long project which will travel through eleven cities home to approximately 1.9 million residents and 30 municipalities and whose populations are expected to grow between 20 and 30 percent by 2025. All eleven cities are on record in strong support of this project and have made significant monetary commitments and developed transit-oriented projects near proposed stations along the extension corridor. In addition, there are over 28,000 students and 3,500 faculty/staff within a half mile radius of the Gold Line stations including those at Citrus College, University of La Verne, Azusa Pacific University, and the Claremont Colleges. These institutions along the corridor have strongly expressed their commitment to the success of the Gold Line in anticipation of the benefits it will bring to their students and staff.

The overall benefits of this project for our region are undeniable. The Gold Line Foothill Extension Transit Oriented Development (TOD) study measured economic development benefits resulting from transit oriented development within a one-half mile radius around each of the Foothill Extension station sites through the year 2030. The study estimates that the successful completion of the project would yield \$43.6 billion in total economic benefits for the region between 2008 and 2030.

Currently, the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) is home to 1.9 million residents, or 19 percent of the Los Angeles County population. By 2035, the SGV will be home to 2.5 million people. The SGV is also home to 784,000 jobs. Of those, 213,000 jobs are located in Gold Line cities, and 123,000 of those jobs are located along the corridor within 2 miles of the stations. By 2035, there will be over 262,000 jobs along the Gold Line with 50 percent of that projected job growth accommodated within walking distance of the stations. The Gold Line corridor can still absorb significant infill development potential – 1,200 acres of opportunity sites exist. That is roughly the size of downtown LA. These opportunity sites can accommodate more housing, retail and commercial development.

The possible future extension to Ontario Airport promises even greater returns on this investment. Expanding the Gold Line would be a great economic boost to the Inland Empire and will provide for communities further east through its connection to Metrolink at the Montclair station, making it even easier for travelers to reach the airport using public transportation and ease the current burden on LAX. This growth has the potential to create thousands of new jobs in construction, retail, security, and airport services. If the Gold Line is extended to reach LA/Ontario International, the Airport would almost certainly have to undergo major growth to sustain the expected increase in travel. In addition, if LA/Ontario were to become a viable alternative to LAX, there would be hundreds of thousands of new travelers flying into the Inland region every year. Imagine the extra revenue these travelers and tourists would generate at local restaurants, shops, hotels, and car rental agencies.

The benefits don't end with the tremendous economic opportunity. Once built, the project will have critical energy savings. The Gold Line could save 1.5 million gallons of gasoline each year. It is expected to cut 126 tons of carbon monoxide, 18 tons of nitrogen oxides, and 5 tons of particular matter (PM10) from the LA Basin's heavily polluted air each year.

In addition to these benefits, the Gold Line Foothill Extension is a wise financial investment. The first phase of the project which connected downtown Los Angeles to Pasadena was completed under budget and on time. Currently, the Gold Line Foothill Extension is the only project before the MTA that is ready to begin construction immediately.

The Federal government has also demonstrated support for this project. Consider the following Federal investments:

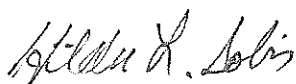
- The Fiscal Year 2003 Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act contained \$2.9 million (P.L. 108-7);
- The Fiscal Year 2004 Transportation, Treasury, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act contained \$4 million in New Starts (P.L. 108-199);
- The Fiscal Year 2005 Transportation, Treasury, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act contained \$500,000 in New Starts (P.L. 108-447);
- SAFETEA-LU (2005) identified the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension as a potential "New Starts" project and included \$19.79 million for the project (P.L. 109-59);
- The Fiscal Year 2006 Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, the District of Columbia, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act contained nearly \$1.24 million (P.L. 109-115); and,
- SAFETEA-LU technical corrections package, which is expected to be considered for approval by the U.S. House during the week of April 28, 2008 and sent to the President, includes language intended to secure strong federal financial support.

For one-half of one percent of the MTA's total capital budget and the inclusion of this project in the LTRP's budgeted category, we could leverage as much as \$320 million in federal funds.

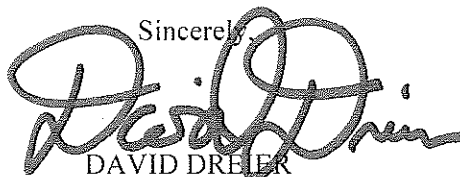
As Members of Congress, we have worked hard to bring needed Federal transportation dollars to the region. Without this support, critical federal dollars could be lost to other regions or states. For example, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency and the Bay Area Rapid Transit District have several successful light rail projects that make that region continually competitive in the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program.

In order to continue the trend of securing increasingly limited Federal dollars for Los Angeles County, it is necessary that the MTA join us by including the Gold Line Foothill Extension in the LRTP as a budgeted project. We look forward to working with you to achieve this goal and better public transportation in Southern California.

Sincerely,



HILDA L. SOLIS
Member of Congress



DAVID DREIER
Member of Congress



ADAM B. SCHIFF
Member of Congress



GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
Member of Congress



JOE BACA
Member of Congress