



NORTH FORK RANCHERIA OF MONO INDIANS OF CALIFORNIA

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July 12, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Support Madera Region SR 99 Widening Project

Dear Secretary Chao,

On behalf of the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians (Tribe), I am writing to express strong support for the Madera County Transportation Commission's (MCTC's) regionally significant project currently under consideration for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program.

The Tribe is a federally recognized Indian tribe with over 2,000 tribal citizens and government offices located in Madera County. The Tribe fully supports the MCTC's BUILD grant application for the California State Route 99 (SR 99) – Avenue 12 to Avenue 17 in Madera County – widening from 4-6 lanes project. The proposed widening would ease traffic congestion and enhance development in and around the City of Madera. One such development is the Tribe's plan to construct and operate a gaming resort on our trust lands located just north and west of the Avenue 17 interchange. Widening SR 99 would facilitate access to our resort and improve the Tribe's ability to finance our development which is expected to create some 1,500 new jobs and generate millions of dollars in economic activity.

Federal funding for this project also will assist in enhancing a vital passenger and freight traffic corridor through California. SR 99 serves as the backbone of the Central Valley's agriculture economy. Identified in the California Freight Plan, this project will strengthen major goods and people movement section of SR 99 through the City of Madera. This project will reduce the transit time for perishable commodities being shipped from farms to markets throughout the United States and around the world. Renewed investment in this critical route will improve safety, reduce congestion, and allow for future development along the corridor leading to job creation in an area faced with continued high unemployment.

Due to the foregoing reasons we support the full funding of this application. If you have any questions, I can be reached at (559) 877-2461.

Sincerely,

Gary W. Walker
Tribal Council Chairman