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Congress of the United States
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DEVELOPMENT

September 18, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I write to you in support of the Brightline West and Nevada Department of Transportation's Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation. The project would connect stations in Las Vegas and Rancho Cucamonga via high-speed rail. Passengers would have access into and out of Los Angeles via the Metrolink rail system at the Rancho Cucamonga station.

The Brightline West project will positively impact the Los Angeles and Inland Empire regions by connecting Las Vegas and Southern California with the first high-speed passenger rail system in the nation. It has the potential to replace many of the more than 40 million annual car trips between Los Angeles and Las Vegas with emissions-free transportation. The Inland Empire's population has grown by 29% since 2003 and is expected to grow by another 20% by 2048. Additionally, over the last 20 years, the Inland Empire's economy and business output has grown 133% to \$213 billion. Los Angeles is America's second-largest metropolitan area with over 17 million people, and this project will provide millions of riders with access to and from LA Union Station and over 60 other Metrolink stations by connecting Brightline West high-speed trains with Metrolink regional rail.

The 218-mile, all-electric high-speed rail service will include a flagship station in Las Vegas, with additional stations in Apple Valley, Hesperia, and Rancho Cucamonga. The Rancho Cucamonga station, known as Cucamonga Station, will connect to Southern California's regional Metrolink service, allowing for seamless connectivity into downtown Los Angeles, Riverside County and beyond. Cucamonga Station will be a multi-modal transportation hub and the first such station in the United States that will provide direct connections to Ontario International Airport (four miles from Cucamonga Station), bus transit service via Omnitrans, and Metrolink local passenger rail all in one place.

The project will bolster additional economic activity for Nevada and Southern California, with an estimated \$10 billion in economic impact and \$1 billion in tax revenue. According to

Brightline West's current plan, the project is expected to create over 35,000 construction jobs and approximately 1,000 permanent jobs, creating pathways for workforce development, training, and access to quality jobs. The development of a new transit system will provide opportunities for ancillary development around station areas, spurring additional economic activity for communities along the corridor. High-speed rail connecting Nevada and California also has the potential to significantly increase visitors to both states, boosting travel and tourism across the region as well as increasing use of mass transit for daily commuters.

The system will align with the Administration's climate goals by diverting millions of automobile users from I-15 onto a faster, more efficient, zero-emission transportation option. Each year, Brightline West operations is expected to remove an estimated 3 million vehicles and over 700 million vehicle miles traveled from the highway, as well as 400,000 tons of CO2 emissions from the atmosphere, supporting California's and Nevada's respective greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals and leading the way for cleaner travel options for Americans.

This added convenience will not only benefit local residents, but also encourage new visitors to explore the region and all it has to offer. The increased connectivity and accessibility will undoubtedly enhance the economic growth and development of our city and surrounding areas.

This project aligns with the goals of the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program. As such, I write to request that you give Brightline West and the Nevada Department of Transportation's application for a \$3.75 billion Intercity Passenger Rail Grant full and fair consideration. If you would like to further discuss this project, please do not hesitate to contact my staff at (202) 225-5464.

Sincerely,

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

JUDY CHU, Ph.D.

Member of Congress, 28th District