

Merced County Farm Bureau

February 16, 2010

Ms. Carrie Bowen
Regional Director
California High-Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Merced County Farm Bureau's support of A2 and opposition to route A3 and A4.

Dear Ms. Bowen:

Merced County Farm Bureau would like to reiterate its opposition to the California High-Speed Rail's (HSR) proposed routes A3 and A4. MCFB finds route A2 to be the logical choice for the Merced to Fresno route. We are also extremely concerned about the HSR's reported support for Ave 24 WYE (Henry Miller Road). Instead we strongly support SR152 WYE because it will be dramatically less intrusive and damaging to fertile agriculture land. As you well know all of the opposed routes will eliminate large amounts prime agriculture land which will have huge economic impacts on agriculture production for the county and the state.

The world population is expected to drastically increase in the next 40 years, likewise farm production will also need to increase to accommodate this boom. How does Merced County continue to be a leading producer to the global market with regards to agriculture if our fertile land keeps being confiscated by the state and local governments?

The "California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley" implemented by Governor Schwarzenegger was created on the premise that the San Joaquin region of the state would come to a consensus on future land use as well as promote controlled economic growth. Within the long-range plan, goals were set to focus on the maintenance of agriculture in the region as well as the reduction of the county's General Plan amendments that will allow for the loss of farm land.

Also, with the elimination of prime agriculture land a domino's effect will occur disturbing the entire process in the county. The water systems will be detrimentally affected, access to farmland will be limited and restrictions will be placed on herbicide and pesticide applications due to wind turbulence created by the high-speed trains. By preserving the prime land for farmers and ranchers it will contribute to the overall quality of life for the community, and the local economy will continue to survive in these difficult economic times.

We appreciate your willingness in recent weeks to work with us in on our current concerns, but HSR only has one chance to make the right decision that will affect the agrarian lifestyle for generations. We at MCFB ask for the immediate elimination of route A3 and A4 as well as Ave 24 WYE. I have attached a previous letter from MCFB stating our written opposition to route A3.

Sincerely,

Peter Koch
President, Merced County Farm Bureau

cc: John Pedrozo, Board of Supervisor
Deidra Kelsey, Board of Supervisor
Mike Nelson, Board of Supervisor
Jerry O'Banion, Board of Supervisor
Hub Walsh, Board of Supervisor