



**CALIFORNIA  
HIGH-SPEED RAIL  
AUTHORITY**

**BRIEFING: JULY 8, 2010 BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM #16**

**TO: Chairman Pringle and Authority Board Members**

**FROM: Dan Leavitt, Deputy Director**

**DATE: 6/30/10**

**RE: U.C. Berkeley ITS Ridership Model Critique**

---

**U.C. Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS) Ridership Model Critique**

The U.C. Berkeley ITS has been invited to present its critique of the high-speed rail ridership model and forecasts used by the Authority. This critique was requested by the state Senate Transportation Committee, which asked the Authority to contract with U.C. Berkeley ITS for the review. The professors who wrote the report conclude that while the primary contractor for these studies Cambridge Systematics (CS), “has followed generally accepted professional standards in carrying out the demand modeling and analysis”, they believe they have found some key problems “that render the key demand forecasting models unreliable for policy analysis”.

Authority staff has carefully reviewed the U.C. Berkeley ITS Final Report, which includes the CS response to the draft version of the report. We believe CS has provided a direct and credible response to each technical point raised and that the ridership model has been, and continues to be, a sound tool for use in high-speed rail planning and environmental analysis. Authority staff and CS will also discuss the critique as part of this agenda item.

Please see the attached response from the Authority CEO and CS to the draft report, as well as a response from Mark Bradley Research & Consulting (a subconsultant to CS). The entire U.C. Berkeley ITS Final Report (including Appendices) by professors David Brownstone, Mark Hansen, and Samer Madanat has also been attached.

**Staff Recommendation**

This is an informational item only.

**Attachments:**

- ✓ Response letters from Authority CEO and Cambridge Systematics (CS) to draft report
- ✓ Letter from Mark Bradley Research & Consulting
- ✓ Final Report from the U.C. Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS)