I 027

September 27, 2007

The Honorable Quentin L Kopp, Chair
California High Speed Rail Authority Governing Board
925 L St Ste 1425
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Sir:

I would like to encourage you to prioritize the Altamont Pass Network as the first choice for the future California High-Speed Rail. The benefits of an Altamont Pass route outweigh those of a Pacheco Pass route:

1. It is estimated that more riders would utilize an Altamont-Central Valley route. There are already a sizable number of commuters using the Altamont Pass, more so than along the Pacheco Pass corridor. There are also more large cities in the Central Valley that would be serviced best by the Altamont route. A large ridership is needed to financially support this system.
2. There would be less environmental impact by choosing the Altamont Pass route. There are more wetlands and agricultural lands along the proposed Pacheco Pass route that would be disturbed. The Altamont Pass environment has already been impacted; diverting automobile traffic onto public transportation could actually help lessen the congestion along this corridor. Altamont is also at a lower elevation and would be easier and less costly to build. I027-1
3. The Central Valley is growing at a fast pace and needs the transportation infrastructure that a high-speed rail system could provide. Bay Area communities have transportation alternatives in place that could be expanded to connect with a new Altamont Pass HST route. The establishment of UC Merced is one example of how this area is growing.
4. The most direct route from Sacramento, our State capitol, to Los Angeles is directly through the Central Valley. The most direct route from San Francisco to Stockton and thus to Sacramento would be via the Altamont Pass.

I urge you to weigh both alternatives in terms of cost, impact, and future growth. I'm certain that once you do, the Altamont Pass route will prove to be the best choice.

Sincerely,

Audrey Alorro
3312 Denver Way
Merced CA 95348