



## Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Freddie N. Simpson  
*President*

Perry K. Geller, Sr.  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

February 13, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave. S.E.  
Washington, DC 20590

Madame Secretary;

On behalf of our 37,000 Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Rail Division Teamster members across the country, we'd like to congratulate you on your appointment to lead the U.S. Department of Transportation.

In addition, we are writing to earnestly request that you, as Secretary of Transportation, approve the \$650 million grant for the electrification of the Caltrain commuter rail service in the Bay Area from San Jose to San Francisco.

Caltrain's current diesel-powered system is dirtier, slower and less efficient than a modern electrified system. Electrifying Caltrain will provide a cleaner, faster and more efficient commuter rail service to the citizens of the Bay Area.

Without your approval, the modernization of a line that carries more than 60,000 riders a day will not be possible. The DOT grant is a key part of the \$2 billion funding for electrification. The State of California, through the High-Speed Rail Authority, is putting in \$730 million in funding for the Caltrain electrification.

If the grant is not funded sometime this month, it could have devastating effects on the Caltrain's electrification project. The rail system, operated by a joint powers agency on the Peninsula, has signed contracts that pledge to give a formal notice to begin work by March 1, 2017. If it fails to provide that notice, the agency could incur penalties so severe that it might not be able to move forward with the project, to the detriment of the communities along the Peninsula and to Caltrain.

The company building the train sets, Stadler Inc., is constructing a new manufacturing facility in Salt Lake City for this purpose. The construction of the facility and manufacture of the railcars will employ over 500 people. Additionally, the construction of the electrification system will create approximately 9,600 jobs.

President Trump has vowed to massively increase funding for the nation's outdated and crumbling infrastructure so we firmly believe the approval of this grant is consistent with his platform and the direction he would like to see transportation go in our country. In approving the grant for Caltrain electrification, the DOT and the Secretary will be keeping with President Trump's commitment to the American people to create jobs and build up our manufacturing sector in the United States of America.

Sincerely,

Freddie N. Simpson,  
National Division President