



April 17, 2023

California Public Utility Commission
California Advanced Service Fund

RE: Letter of Support – CalNeva Broadband LLC CASF Grant Application

To whom it may concern,

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership) is pleased to support CalNeva Broadband LLC's grant application to expand its service footprint to additional unserved businesses, households, and anchor institutions.

Partnership workgroups focus on action by addressing a top priority for the region. The Advanced Communication Services workgroup focuses on facilitating the use of regionwide, advanced communications. Recognizing that high-speed, broadband telecommunications access is essential in doing business and accessing services, the workgroup is promoting greater deployment and use in the underserved San Joaquin Valley. Accordingly, the San Joaquin Valley Regional Broadband Consortium initiative was established to address the digital divide and impact change in the lack of high-speed broadband infrastructure throughout the valley.

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley therefore understands how important CalNeva Broadband's role is in providing internet services for locally based businesses, hiring residents, and supporting the local community.

If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vito Chiesa, Board Chair



California Partnership for the
San Joaquin Valley

May 10, 2023

Assemblymember, Chris R. Holden
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O St, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 380 (Arambula) –Support for Labor Trafficking Unit in the Department of Industrial Relations

Dear Assemblymember Holden,

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley writes to express our support for Assembly Bill 380 (Arambula), the California Labor Trafficking Prevention Act. This bill will protect California's most vulnerable workers from being taken advantage of by unscrupulous individuals and businesses who force them to work under duress with little to no pay. This bill will provide the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) with statutory authority to investigate and prosecute claims of human labor trafficking.

In the San Joaquin Valley, human trafficking has serious financial and economic repercussions that have a significant impact on rural communities we serve throughout the region. Therefore, we understand the urgency to protect California's most vulnerable and support Assembly Bill 380.

Labor trafficking is a form of human trafficking which involves obtaining labor through use of force, fraud, or coercion. There are many different situations that trafficked workers face—threats from employers relating to documentation status, harm to their families, and loss of wages—that prevent victims from trying to escape and seek services available.

A September 2020 report published by the Little Hoover Commission concluded that the state's efforts to prevent labor trafficking are fragmented. California must do more to ensure labor traffickers are brought to justice through increased investigation and prosecution. Currently, no state agencies are tasked with preventing labor trafficking or coordinating with other agencies to stop trafficking before it starts.

By establishing a Labor Trafficking Unit within DIR, our state can take necessary steps to properly prevent, investigate, and coordinate state efforts to put a stop to the abuses of workers.

Sincerely,

Vito Chiesa, Board Chair



California Partnership for the
San Joaquin Valley

March 14, 2023

California Advanced Services Fund
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear CASF Staff and Commissioners:

On behalf of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, we fully support Comcast's requests for funds from the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to deploy and expand broadband infrastructure in several unincorporated communities of Fresno and Tulare Counties, including unincorporated Fresno, Clovis, Tipton, Pixley, and Earlimart.

As these areas are not located within the incorporated cities of Fresno and Tulare Counties, residents living here struggle to find affordable, reliable high-speed Internet services. The fiber-based project proposed by Comcast will provide over 4,800 households with multiple options of high-speed service, including low-cost and no-cost options when combined with the federal Affordable Connectivity Plan.

Enhanced broadband services will enable these families to take advantage of online resources to assist with homework and other educational opportunities, as well as provide access to job-seeking resources, financial services, telehealth, and other amenities millions of Californians take for granted.

Again, we fully support Comcast's CASF application and request for funding to expand their high-speed network into these communities. These residents would benefit greatly from the enhanced services Comcast would provide and enable them to join the 21st century digital economy. Residents in rural areas are often in serious need of improved access to education, health care and other services available online and this project would be a great step forward in addressing those needs. Should you have any questions, please contact Vito Chiesa at chiesav@stancounty.com.

Sincerely,

Vito Chiesa, Board Chair



California Partnership for the
San Joaquin Valley

April 7, 2023

Administrator Amit Bose
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington DC, 20590

RE: Support for San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority FY 22-23 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (Fed-State Partnership) Grant

Dear Administrator Bose,

I write to express my support for the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority's (SJJPA) FY 22-23 Fed-State Partnership grant for the North Central Valley Rail Capacity Enhancement Project. The project proposes an ambitious suite of proposed corridor-based capacity improvements that will enable the expansion of state-supported intercity passenger rail services and enhanced freight rail velocity and efficiency, which is especially important to the vital agricultural sector in the corridor.

The North Central Valley (Escalon – Fresno) Rail Capacity Enhancement Project is located along a key 100-mile shared-use rail corridor owned by BNSF Railway (BNSF) in California's Central Valley. The Project Area includes the BNSF Stockton Subdivision between Escalon (BNSF Milepost 1099) and Fresno (BNSF Milepost 998). This segment is a critical feeder to BNSF's Southern Transcontinental route and hosts high volumes of BNSF freight trains and the *San Joaquin's* intercity passenger trains of the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA) operated by Amtrak between Oakland/Sacramento, Fresno, and Bakersfield. The project would invest in double tracking, new or improved bridge and highway-rail grade crossings and allow for accommodation of additional *San Joaquin's* intercity passenger rail trains.

Communities along the corridor will experience health and environmental benefits from improved air quality due to reduced train idling, and fewer idling vehicles at grade crossings. Air quality remains a leading concern in the Central Valley and multi-modal freight and passenger rail investments represent a prime opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The project would also promote community connectivity, accessibility, and safety by removing railway-highway grade crossings that have often been a historic source of community dividing infrastructure and present safety challenges for vehicles and pedestrians.

SJJPA is seeking \$75 million in Fed-State Partnership funding and has received \$18 million in state matching funds for this project.

I urge your careful review of this request.

Sincerely,

Vito Chiesa, Board Chair



April 13, 2023

James Perrault, District 6 Local Assistance Engineer
California Department of Transportation
1352 W. Olive Avenue, P. O. Box 12616
Fresno, CA 93778-2616

RE: Letter of Support – Clean California Local Grant Program

Dear Mr. Perrault;

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley is pleased to support the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority's (SJPA) application for the Madera Station Relocation Project (Project).

SJPA requests \$3 million in Caltrans Clean California Local Grant Program (CCLGP) funds. The Project will relocate the existing station near Avenue 12 to better meet regional goals of improving ridership and connectivity. The station relocation will provide significant benefits to the community. The station is easily accessible from State Route 99, providing an alternative commute to vehicle travel. The new station will improve access to bicycle riders in southern Madera County. The Project is located within and will serve underserved communities within the Central Valley. Construction of the project will also support anticipated transit-oriented development in southeast Madera County adjacent to the station and the future High-Speed Train Station.

Another significant benefit of the Project is the creation of a new community space. The new train station will be accessible to all users regardless of income and ability. The Project will include drought tolerant landscaping, lighting, passenger amenities such as benches and trash receptacles, restrooms, and shade structures over the train platform and parking lot. The train station will beautify the area, reduce the heat island effect, and anchor planned transit-oriented development that will build out around the Project.

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley supports the Project application for the CCLGP funding to implement the Project. The Project is consistent with CCLGP goals to reduce debris, install beautification measures in public spaces, mitigate the heat island effect, and enhance community placemaking, and advance equity for underserved communities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vito Chiesa".

Vito Chiesa, Board Chair



California Partnership for the
San Joaquin Valley

April 13, 2023

Parminder Singh, District 10 Local Assistance Engineer
California Department of Transportation
1976 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
Stockton California 95205

RE: Letter of Support – Clean California Local Grant Program

Dear Mr. Singh;

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley is pleased to support the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRR) application for the North Lathrop Transfer Station (Project).

SJRR requests \$3 million in Caltrans Clean California Local Grant Program (CCLGP) funds. The Project will construct a new commuter rail station near Lathrop Road and 5th Street in underserved communities in the City of Lathrop. This Project will help to achieve the regional goals of improving ridership and connectivity of the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) service between Sacramento, Merced and the Bay Area. The Project will be easily accessible from Lathrop Road by bicyclists or pedestrians. The new station will include a surface parking lot to accommodate those driving to the station and will include bus stop for those traveling by transit. The Project will enhance passenger rail and transit access and connectivity, create new alternatives to automobile use, and increase air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Another significant benefit of the Project is the creation of a new community space. The new train station will be accessible by all users regardless of income and ability. The Project will include drought tolerant landscaping, lighting, passenger amenities such as benches and trash receptacles, restrooms, and shade structures over the train platform and parking lot. The train station will beautify the area, reduce the heat island effect, and provide mobility options for underserved community residents in Lathrop.

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley supports the Project application for the Caltrans Clean California Local Grant Program (CCLGP) funding to implement the Project. The Project is consistent with CCLGP goals to reduce debris, install beautification measures in public spaces, mitigate the heat island effect, and enhance community placemaking, and advance equity for underserved communities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vito Chiesa, Board Chair