

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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*Serious drought.
Help save water!*

April 30, 2015

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress
2163 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Julia Brownley
Member of Congress
1019 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congress Members DeFazio and Brownley:

In response to your letter of March 2, 2015, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) shares your concerns for railroad grade crossing safety. The Ventura rail corridor is an important element of the State's rail network. We are committed to rail safety as demonstrated in an allocation of over \$7.4M of State funds, just this fiscal year, for the Ventura County Sealed Corridor project providing additional safety improvements along this corridor.

Caltrans is diligent in seeing that Federal Highway Administration Section 130 funds are utilized for the purpose of eliminating hazards to motor vehicles, trains and pedestrians and reducing the number and severity of crashes, at existing highway-railroad crossings. By working with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), Caltrans utilizes a priority diagnostic listing of grade crossings throughout the State for the Section 130 funds; however, at this time there are no grade crossings identified in Ventura County. Currently the approved diagnostic listing has identified 39 locations in 17 counties around the State. Your letter correctly identifies that the State of California has over \$42M in unobligated Section 130 funds; these funds will be fully utilized in addressing the safety improvements of the current CPUC priority list of grade crossings.

The at-grade crossing at issue, on Rice Avenue in Oxnard, is equipped with median islands, quad gates, flashing lights, audible warning bells, and interconnected traffic signal in addition to the required pavement markings and advance warning signage. Further improvements could be a grade separation. We will work with Ventura County to consider the State of California's Section 190 Program as a possible funding source for this solution.

We are committed to expeditiously obligating and utilizing all federal funds for this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Malcolm Dougherty".

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY
Director

c: The Honorable Michael Picker, President, California Public Utilities Commission