



North State Super Region

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 Mike Woodman, Chair

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March 23, 2021

Mr. Mitch Weiss
 Executive Director
 California Transportation Commission
 1120 N. Street, MS 52
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 Highway Infrastructure Program Funding Distribution.

Dear Executive Director Weiss,

The North State Super Region (NSSR) is a partnership representing the sixteen Northern Regional Transportation Planning Agencies in California and was formed to provide a unified voice when addressing state and federal transportation funding and policy decisions and establish coordination of transportation planning efforts in the mega region. The NSSR has a unified goal to support transportation investments within this megaregion that improve the economy, the efficiency of movement of people and goods, and safety.

The NSSR would like to thank the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and Caltrans for their assistance in working with the regions to prepare and vet the funding distribution scenarios and administration methodology for the \$911 million in Highway Infrastructure Program funding provided to the State under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA).

The NSSR supports the proposed approach to divide funding with 60% going to the State and 40% going to a regional distribution option for the total estimated \$911 million of CRRSAA Highway Infrastructure Programs funding now available to California.

The NSSR feels that the most equitable distribution of the \$365 million of regional funds would be to utilize the 100% distribution through the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) formula for the Regional Improvement Program (RIP), administered by the CTC. The NSSR feel that the RIP formula, which takes into account both population and centerline highway miles and includes a 40/60 North/South split produces the most equitable approach to funding distribution to address COVID-19 impacts for both large and small transportation agencies in the State. Additionally, the 100%

STIP distribution proposal meets the CRRSAA law's intent for at least \$183 million to be suballocated to large UZAs over 200,000 in population.

Existing funding formulas applied year-to-year in California include strong weighting for road mileage such as the STIP, Highway Users Tax Account (HUTA), and the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account (RMRA) Programs. Regions were impacted according to these formulas' programs, so relief funds should not be disbursed by a substantially different formula. While, the NSSR recognizes the benefits related to the flexibility provided through the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program in relation to non-capital projects, the strictly population based formula does not result in equitable distribution for small regions and any application of this formula should include a meaningful minimum share amount.

Consistent with the existing STBG and STIP programs, the NSSR also supports allowing for the ability of regional agencies receiving smaller CRRSAA funding shares to exchange federal funding for state-only funding.

The NSSR also feels strongly that the funding distribution selected for CRRSAA, should not set precedent as it is our collective expectation to continue discussing distribution options for any future federal funding.

We sincerely appreciate the ongoing partnership of the CTC to support the relief of regional and local agencies along with the communities they serve that have been impacted by COVID-19, as well as CTC's creative thinking to provide flexibility and action taken to get these funds out to regions quickly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read "Mike Woodman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Woodman, Executive Director
Nevada County Transportation Commission
Chair, North State Super Region