



August 16, 2019

The Honorable Terry Canales, Chair
House Committee on Transportation
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Chairman Canales,

Thank you for your hard work and leadership on transportation issues this session. We are writing to urge the House Committee on Transportation to consider and study the potential for intercity passenger rail, with initial focus on the greater Austin-San Antonio corridor, during this legislative interim.

For years, Austin and San Antonio have continued to rank as two of the fastest-growing cities in the nation. In addition to this metropolitan growth, projections from the Texas Demographic Center indicate that suburban Williamson, Hays, and Comal counties along the Austin-San Antonio corridor are expected to gain over 2 million additional residents by 2050.

As we look toward this future, congestion will only become more severe. Just last year, the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) ranked six road segments of I-35 between Austin and San Antonio among the state's most congested. This congestion comes at a price, which TTI projected to cost motorists over \$300 million - last year alone - in wasted time and fuel.

With this in mind, we recommend the following interim charge to support our growing infrastructure needs:

- *Study the feasibility and requirements to initiate an intercity passenger rail service between the greater metropolitan areas of Austin and San Antonio, including review of opportunities to utilize existing rail along the corridor. Identify potential funding sources, as well as necessary state contracting and infrastructure improvements.*

Improved transportation connectivity is critical for the Austin-San Antonio corridor. We must not only look at how to utilize our current assets most effectively, but also find new and creative solutions for this corridor. As members of this region, we believe that it is imperative for the House Transportation Committee to explore new opportunities for our constituents to have frequent, safe, and dependable transportation.

Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Steve Allison in blue ink.

Rep. Steve Allison
House District 121

Handwritten signature of Diego Bernal in black ink.

Rep. Diego Bernal
House District 123

Handwritten signature of John Bucy, III in black ink.

Rep. John Bucy, III
House District 136

Rep. Sheryl Cole
House District 46

Rep. Philip Cortez
House District 117

Rep. John Cyrier
House District 17

Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins
House District 120

Rep. Vikki Goodwin
House District 47

Rep. Roland Gutierrez
House District 119

Rep. Gina Hinojosa
House District 49

Rep. Donna Howard
House District 48

Rep. Celia Israel
House District 50

Rep. John Kuempel
House District 44

Rep. Ray Lopez
House District 125

Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer
House District 116

Rep. Ina Minjarez
House District 124

Rep. Leo Pacheco
House District 118

Rep. Eddie Rodriguez
House District 51

Rep. James Talarico
House District 52

Rep. Erin Zwiener
House District 45