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WATER, PARKS AND WILDLIFE  
  
CHAIR, BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE # 5  
ON PUBLIC SAFETY

January 19, 2022

Honorable Metro Board of Directors  
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: West Santa Ana Branch LPA**

Honorable Members of the Metro Board:

I write to respectfully request a vote in favor of the West Santa Ana Branch Locally Preferred Alternative 1, which will service Environmental Justice communities along Interstate 710 trucking corridor. The initial period of construction agreed upon in Measure R and Measure M are vital to ensure the health and safety of the communities the West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) will serve. Additionally expedient completion of the WSAB will reduce the demand on the Interstate 710 trucking corridor thus improving goods movement from the ports. It is imperative the resources, money, and time, consumed by the discussion of freeway widening are reallocated to completing the West Santa Ana Branch project. It is outrageous these resources are being used to choke communities like mine versus building transit projects that will heal manufactured community divisions.

Despite the cost of the project increasing from \$4 billion to \$8.5 billion, completion of the WSAB as originally agreed upon addresses multiple issues faced by Environmental Justice communities along the corridor. Ridership estimates on the completed WSAB are upward of 100,000 per day, thus decreasing corridor demand for commuters. By honoring promises made and completing the WSAB project by 2028, METRO will place action behind words; this project embodies equity, which is so desperately needed in communities like mine to reverse the steady erosion of trust.

The WSAB will provide a fixed guideway transit option that will serve Brown and Black communities and low-income populations within the project area. Current transit options in the project area consist of local bus routes along congested city streets, with limited express services. People of color make up 66% of the population within the project area, and 25% of the residents are low income; WSAB service will become a tool that enriches the lives of the residents within the project area.

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A phased approach to construction of the WSAB breaks the promise made to the communities who approved Measure M, willingly taxing themselves for transportation improvement projects. Additionally, a phased approach prolongs construction related emissions at the same time exacerbating demand and emissions on interstate 710 trucking corridor. A two-fold emissions increase raises the risk of health hazards for underserved communities along the corridor. Communities along the 710 corridor can no longer wait for the solution that lowers emissions and improves community health. The WSAB is the solution that fixes air quality, health, and reduces freeway congestion thus speeding up goods movement to the railyards. It is time METRO has the back of the people they claim to serve. The WSAB project gets us out of our cars and speeds the movement of goods from Long Beach to East Los Angeles. My communities deserve representation in projects to stop the killing of us faster; the WSAB project cuts emissions that shorten our lives.

The completion of WSAB on time is a multi-benefit solution to the most important needs of communities within the project area and the Interstate 710 trucking corridor. WSAB will connect underserved populations to union station thus increasing chances to gainful employment:

- Reduce the demand of commuting and congestion on the I-710
- Mitigate freeway expansion demands in the project area
- Improve air quality and health of the surrounding communities
- Reduce bus traffic in surrounding cities
- Help restore community trust in Government organizations

The residents of Assembly District 58 and the Interstate 710 corridor support the locally preferred alternative and construction on the original timeframe to ensure health, safety, and economic progress and opportunities within the project area.

Sincerely,

**CRISTINA GARCIA**  
**CHAIR, LEGISLATIVE WOMEN'S CAUCUS**  
**ASSEMBLYMEMBER, 58TH DISTRICT**

CG:lg

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**CRISTINA GARCIA**  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FIFTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT  
CHAIR, LEGISLATIVE WOMEN'S CAUCUS

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