PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
320 WEST 4TH STREET, SUITE 500
LOS ANGELES, CA 90013

April 13, 2020

Mark A. McLoughlin
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sent by email to: Bakersfield_Palmdale@hsr.ca.gov

Re: California High-Speed Rail – Bakersfield to Palmdale Project Section
SCH 2009082062 — *Draft Environmental Impact Report*

Dear Mr. McLoughlin:

The California Public Utilities Commission (Commission/CPUC) has jurisdiction over rail crossings (crossings) in California. CPUC ensures that crossings are safely designed, constructed, and maintained. The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Branch (RCEB) is in receipt of the *Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)* for the proposed California High-Speed Rail – Bakersfield to Palmdale Project Section. California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is the lead agency.

The Notice of Availability (NOA) provided by the Authority states that the Bakersfield to Palmdale Project Section will provide a connection from the Central Valley to the Antelope Valley and Los Angeles County, closing the existing passenger rail gap between Northern and Southern California through the Tehachapi Mountains, as well as providing new opportunities for economic development and revitalization in the cities along this corridor. The approximately 80-mile project section will travel through or near the communities of Bakersfield, Edison, Tehachapi, Rosamond, Lancaster and Palmdale with stations in Bakersfield and Palmdale.

Section S.5.2 of the DEIR outlines the Bakersfield to Palmdale (B–P) Build Alternatives 1,2,3, and 5. The High-Speed Rail (HSR) is proposed to operate on a fully dedicated right-of-way, and fully grade-separated at highway-rail crossings. Table S-1 on Page S-12 of the DEIR Summary summarizes a total of 74 or 75 proposed grade-separated crossings, subject to CPUC approval. Appendix 2-A: Road Crossings, Closures, and Detours lists all proposed roadway closures and crossings for each alternative. In addition, Appendix 2-B: Railroad Crossings lists rail-rail crossings of the HSR with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and Metrolink (SCRRA) tracks.

CPUC General Order (G.O.) 88-B establishes criteria for altering existing crossings, including roadway realignment, reconstruction of grade-separated structures, and construction of a grade-separated structure that eliminates an existing at-grade crossing. The Authority will be required to submit a G.O. 88-B request for alteration of each existing crossing on the corridor, unless an application to the Commission is required. Requests to alter existing crossings may be approved by RCEB staff, provided completion of request as outlined in G.O. 88-B, Section 5 and consensus among parties. Roadways closed at the HSR corridor may require G.O. 88-B authorization if a nearby grade crossing remains in place.

G.O. 88-B also establishes cases for which the Authority must apply to the Commission for authorization, including construction of new highway-rail or rail-rail crossings. Refer to the CPUC Rules of Practice and Procedure (www.cpuc.ca.gov/rpp/), Rule 3.9 Railroad Across Public Road and Rule 3.10 Railroad Across Railroad, for new crossing application requirements. You may consult with RCEB staff to determine the need for authorization by G.O. 88-B or by application at each proposed crossing on the corridor.

All grade-separated structures, including rail-rail structures, are subject to minimum vertical and horizontal clearance requirements outlined in G.O. 26-D, Section 2, Section 3, and Section 4. Clearance between parallel tracks is governed by G.O. 26-D, Section 5. Public roads, highways, and streets crossing under tracks and over

tracks are subject to G.O. 26-D, Section 12 and Section 13, respectively. The overhead contact system (OCS) powering the HSR is subject to clearance requirements stated in G.O. 95 and G.O. 176.

A diagnostic meeting is required for each crossing alteration or construction. The diagnostic team consists of representatives from the railroads, roadway agencies, local government agencies, CPUC, and private stakeholders. You may contact RCEB staff to schedule diagnostic meetings, and to discuss preliminary designs of grade-separated structures.

Please continue to keep RCEB informed of the project's development. If you have any questions, you may contact Matt Cervantes (matthew.cervantes@cpuc.ca.gov) to discuss crossings in Los Angeles County and Oliver Garcia (oliver.garcia@cpuc.ca.gov) to discuss crossings in Kern County.

Sincerely,

Matt Cervantes
Utilities Engineer
Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch
Rail Safety Division

CC: State Clearinghouse, state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov
Peggy Ygbuhay (UPRR), pygbuhay@up.com
Donald Filippi (Metrolink), FillippiD@scrra.net