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January 13, 2026

The Honorable David Fink, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE W-32
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Kern County's Cherry Avenue Grade Separation Project Application for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP-National)

Dear Honorable David Fink,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for the Kern County Federal State Partnership (FSP) grant application. The Project is the result of a close collaboration between Kern County, the cities of Bakersfield and Shafter, the Greater Bakersfield Grade Separation District, and BNSF, a strong partnership of public and private entities committed to improving safety and quality of life in the community.

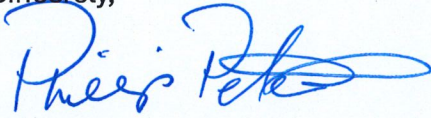
The proposed project located at the City of Shafter and Kern County boundary aims to grade-separate an existing rail/road at-grade crossing located at Cherry Avenue and the rail corridor which carries Amtrak's Gold Runner daily services as well as daily freight services. The Cherry Avenue at-grade crossing is ranked first in the City of Shafter by FRA's accident prediction system and represents a significant safety concern as well as a recurring impediment to local mobility. Since 2020, there have been three safety incidents at the Cherry Avenue crossing, including accidents which have resulted in injuries and fatalities. Grade separating this crossing will prevent collisions, reduce delays for both roadway users and rail traffic, and enhance overall safety for the City of Shafter and Kern County communities.

In eliminating delays resulting from safety incidents, the Project will benefit intercity passenger rail reliability along this route which passes through Kern County and the City of Shafter, and which connects major regional cities such as Bakersfield, Fresno, Stockton, and Sacramento. The Project will improve safety for road users and directly raise the quality of life for residents through improved mobility. By enhancing connectivity, the project will

help create a more livable environment and allow residents and workers better access to jobs and opportunities.

We are committed to supporting the safe, efficient, and reliable operations of passenger and freight rail in California's Central Valley. This transformative project will make a dramatic difference in the safety and mobility of the local community and its delivery and operations closely align with the sought after outcomes of the FSP program. We respectfully request that you give the Kern County's FSP grant application your full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phillip Peters", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: City of Shafter
Kern County Public Works Department
Townsend Public Affairs