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March 16, 2026

The Honorable David Valadao
U.S. House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Valadao,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for Fiscal Year 2027 community project funding for the Panama Road Rehabilitation Project. This project addresses a critical segment of Panama Road between Chevalier Road and State Route 184. The corridor is a vital east–west connector for residents, agricultural operations, school transportation, and commercial activity in southeastern Kern County. Years of heavy use have left the roadway in deteriorated condition that now requires full rehabilitation to maintain safe and reliable travel.

Kern County proposes a comprehensive reconstruction plan that includes hot mix asphalt overlay, targeted dig-outs, and full depth road reconstruction where needed. The project will also install thermoplastic striping and pavement markings that will improve visibility and safety for motorists. Engineering estimates place the total cost at \$4,898,770, including cold planning, roadway excavation, aggregate base, asphalt placement, traffic control, stormwater compliance, finishing work, water supply development, mobilization, and a contingency necessary to responsibly manage construction risk.

Panama Road supports essential community and economic functions. It links rural neighborhoods to jobs and services in Bakersfield and provides a primary route for agricultural workers and goods moving through the region. Current roadway conditions create safety concerns, slow travel times, and increase vehicle wear for residents who rely on this corridor daily. Improving this roadway will promote safer mobility, enhance regional goods movement, and support continued economic stability for the unincorporated communities it serves.

Federal investment in this project will allow Kern County to move forward with a long-overdue rehabilitation that the local community strongly supports. The County has demonstrated readiness to proceed and has developed a clear scope of work that will deliver tangible improvements for residents and businesses. This is precisely the kind of transportation investment that strengthens rural infrastructure and supports long-term economic vitality.

Thank you for your consideration of Kern County's request. I appreciate your ongoing commitment to improving infrastructure and transportation safety throughout the Central Valley. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide any additional information.

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: Kern County Public Works Department
Townsend Public Affairs