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**SANTA ANA  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE**

April 27, 2020

The Honorable Bill Jahn  
President, Southern California Association of Governments  
900 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1700  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

and by electronic mail to SCAG Officers and Executive Staff

**Re: Request for Postponement of Scheduled Consideration of the Final “Connect SoCal” Plan (SCAG’s 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy) and the Related Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR).**

Dear President Jahn and Members of the Regional Council:

In light of the global pandemic and the resulting forbearance that is being afforded by all levels of government, on behalf of the business and industry associations that are signatories to this letter, we respectfully ask SCAG to postpone, for 90 days from its scheduled May 7, 2020

meeting, its consideration of the proposed final 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (“Connect SoCal” or the “Plan”) and its associated proposed final Program Environmental Impact Report (the “PEIR”). This request is consistent with the urgent pleas made by many of us during the March 25<sup>th</sup> SCAG GLUE Council meeting, and, as you know, repeated in various meetings since then. Specifically, we ask SCAG to postpone consideration of the Plan and the PEIR until early August 2020 for the reasons outlined below:

First, the general public, all stakeholders, SCAG’s staff, its Regional Council and its committee members are all presently facing unprecedented logistical challenges brought on by the current global, once-in-a-century pandemic and the emergency governmental orders imposed because of it. These challenges delayed SCAG’s public release of the proposed final Connect SoCal and PEIR until late March; and it has confounded the stakeholders’ efforts to review, distill, discuss and consider the final Plan’s merits. Adding to the challenge is the fact that Connect SoCal and the PEIR with their appendices sum to roughly 10,000 pages; and we are trying to digest them under these harsh circumstances. A 90-day extension of time will allow for appropriate public input and allow stakeholders to take the necessary steps to review the documents and work with SCAG’s staff in order to perfect the proposals, as well as to communicate with the decisionmakers who will vote on them.

Second, by engaging in discussions with SCAG’s staff last week (on April 15<sup>th</sup>), our representatives confirmed our concern that, without a more thorough review by the stakeholders, Connect SoCal may still include some serious errors. One example of this was identified during last week’s meeting, and involves the Plan’s erroneous depiction of some already approved and entitled development and housing projects. Specifically, although Connect SoCal is meant to be a rollup of local government input regarding housing and employment growth, including existing entitlements, we learned that after last fall’s release of the draft Connect SoCal for formal public comment, the proposed final Connect SoCal underwent changes whereby it now reflects a reduced number of housing units and jobs scheduled to be created at some already approved land-use entitlements. In short, the Plan as proposed is not in alignment with a number of existing entitlements. Thus, if approved, the Plan would put those entitled development and housing projects in legal jeopardy. This would mean that much-needed housing and jobs would be put at risk at what is an absolutely critical moment for both housing production and the economy. Even if SCAG’s staff can scramble to correct these problems, their discovery at this late stage serves to underscore the clear need for stakeholders to continue to review these final proposals with the aim of detecting changes and errors and proposing corrections.

Third, if SCAG were to take an additional 90 days before considering what we trust will be an improved proposal, then all parties concerned will be able to consider the lasting effects of the pandemic on SCAG’s present plans and changing foresight. We will be urging SCAG to qualify and perhaps condition Connect SoCal in ways that will take into account the need for much greater flexibility and the ability to foster economic recovery from the depths of a precipitous economic contraction. “Business as usual” is no longer a reasonable option for

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SCAG – no more so than it is for stakeholders and the general public. SCAG's planning and its strategies need to reflect this fact.

Lastly, SCAG should also recognize that our federal, state and local governments are granting regulatory forbearance in extraordinary ways. Tax deadlines are being moved, private rental obligations are being postponed, and regulatory deadlines of all types are being delayed. Given the reasons set out above, there should be no reason for SCAG to rush to adopt Connect SoCal and the PEIR in its current condition and under the current circumstances.

Therefore, we respectfully urge SCAG to postpone consideration of Connect SoCal and the PEIR for 90 days until August 2020.

Sincerely,



Richard Lambros, Managing Director  
Southern California Leadership Council



**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**



Lucy Dunn, President & CEO  
Orange County Business Council (OCBC)



**ORANGE COUNTY  
BUSINESS COUNCIL**



Bill Allen, Chief Executive Officer  
Los Angeles Economic Development  
Corporation (LAEDC)



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Maria Salinas, President & CEO  
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce



**LOS ANGELES AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**



Tracy Hernandez, Chief Executive Officer  
Los Angeles County Business Federation  
(BizFed)

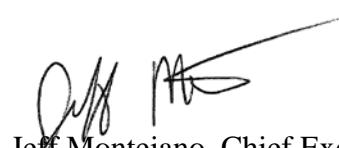


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Jeff Montejano, Chief Executive Officer  
Building Industry Association of Southern  
California (BIASC)



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Dan Dunmoyer, President & CEO  
California Building Industry Association  
(CBIA)



Mario Rodriguez, Chairman  
Hispanic 100



Paul Granillo, President & CEO  
Inland Empire Economic Partnership (IEEP)



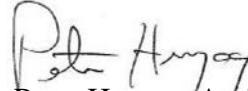
Holly Schroeder, President & CEO  
Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development  
Corporation



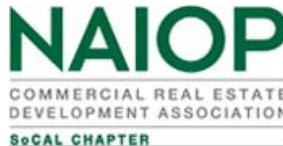
Ray Baca, Executive Director  
Engineering Contractors' Association (ECA)



William R. Manis, President & CEO  
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership



Peter Herzog, Assistant Director of  
Legislative Affairs  
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Mike Lewis, Senior Vice President  
Construction Industry Air Quality Coalition  
(CIAQC)



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*Denise Cooper*

Denise Cooper, President  
Southern California Contractors Association

**SCCA**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

*Theresa Harvey*

Theresa Harvey, President & CEO  
North Orange County Chamber



NORTH  
ORANGE COUNTY  
CHAMBER

*David L. Elliott*

David L. Elliott, President/CEO  
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce

