



July 18, 2013

The Honorable Tom LaBonge
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Suite 480
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: Repeal of Senate Bill 211 (Robbins) RE: Orange Line Upgrade (CF 13-0002-S100)

Dear Councilmember LaBonge,

The Valley Industry and Commerce Association wishes to thank you for introducing a resolution in support of repealing 1991's Senate Bill 211 (Robbins), which banned the installation of light rail transit (LRT) along the Metro Orange Line route. VICA strongly supports upgrading the Metro Orange Line to LRT.

LRT was the clear top choice for MTA and Valley residents until SB 211 removed that option. It was—and still is—the most economically-efficient option, with significantly higher ridership potential than buses and lower cost than underground subways.

The Valley has simply outgrown its Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. When BRT was determined as the only affordable alternative following the passage of SB 221, MTA estimated that Orange Line ridership would average 16,100 weekday riders; as of September 2012, average ridership was 31,787 — more than double the initial estimate. During rush hours, Orange Line buses are often too crowded for new passengers at many stops, requiring potential riders to wait extended periods or forcing them back into their cars.

Along with ridership growth, automobile and pedestrian traffic is steadily increasing as the Valley population grows. This additional traffic is causing Orange Line buses to be delayed, leading to unreliability for riders to reach Valley businesses. These issues are not present for other Metro lines, including the San Gabriel Valley's LRT Gold Line system.

The Valley needs a rail system on par with other parts of the City of Los Angeles, particularly as our tax dollars through Measure R are spent on projects in the Westside and downtown. The repeal of SB 211 will be the first step toward the Valley finally having a 21st Century transit system.

Sincerely,

David Adelman
Chair

Stuart Waldman
President

CC: Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board of Directors