

April 6, 2015

The Honorable Assembly Member Jim Frazier
Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building
1020 N. Street, Room 112
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1043 - State Route 43 Interregional Road System: **SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Frazier:

The Fresno Council of Governments would like to express strong support for Assembly Bill 1043 (Salas), which will include State Route 43 (SR 43) as part of the Interregional Road System (IRRS). State Route 43, commonly referred to as the "Central Valley Highway", is comprised of a 98 mile predominantly two-lane roadway originating in Kern County, traversing Tulare and Kings Counties, and terminating in Fresno County. SR 43 is an important interregional transportation corridor that functions in a complementary role to SR 99 through the Central Valley region as well as serves as an alternate to I-5 through the Central Valley. As recently reported at the March 2015 California Transportation Commission meeting, the Central Valley region is anticipated to have more than a 40% population increase by 2040, further stressing these vital transportation corridors.

SR 43 carries more than 21,000 vehicles daily and is identified as a key route for local freight transportation. Furthermore, SR 43 is a significant component in the goods movement system, providing intermodal services such as truck to rail modes while also serving as a transit route by providing access to intercity passenger rail service stations in Kern and Kings Counties. SR 43 provides a necessary route for interregional travel of people and goods. SR 43 is the only route with direct access to the Colonel Allensworth State Historical Park, two State prisons are located along SR 43 and commuters between Fresno, Corcoran, and Wasco travel this route to these and various other regional employment centers. According to the Draft Caltrans Transportation Concept Report dated December 2014, SR 43 is evolving from a primarily rural route to a more urbanized route with increased development occurring in the cities served by the routes.

AB 1043 would amend Section 164.12 of the Streets and Highways Code to add SR 43 to the list of interregional and intercounty routes. SR 43 would then be eligible to compete for Interregional Improvement Program (IIP) funds in order to fund necessary capital improvement projects as demand warrants. It does not automatically give the funds to the regional transportation planning agencies (RTPAs). Through the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process, the RTPAs must compete with the rest of the state and request the funds for programming by the California Transportation Commission. By adding SR 43 to be eligible for the competitive IIP funds, improvements to this important interregional route could be realized.

The Fresno Council of Governments fosters local, county, state, federal and regional agency partnerships to promote transportation planning initiatives that improve connectivity and a well-managed and maintained regional system with a broad range of transportation choices. Possible improvements along SR 43 will contribute to a more reliable, safe and secure regional transportation system that will improve our mobility access.

We respectfully urge you to support AB 1043.

Sincerely,

Amarpreet Dhaliwal, Chair
Mayor, City of San Joaquin

City of Clovis

City of Coalinga

City of Firebaugh

City of Fowler

City of Fresno

City of Huron

City of Kerman

City of Kingsburg

City of Mendota

City of Orange Cove

City of Parlier

City of Reedley

City of San Joaquin

City of Sanger

City of Selma

County of Fresno

Cc:

Assemblymember Katcho Achadjian, Assembly Transportation Committee Vice-Chair

Assemblymember Rudy Salas, 32nd District (Kern/Kings)

Assemblymember Devon Mathis, 26th District (Tulare)

Assemblymember Shannon Grove, 34th District (Kern)

Assemblymember Jim Patterson, 23rd District (Fresno)

Assemblymember Henry Perea, 31st District (Fresno)