



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

AGENDA ITEM NO.

C-2

For the meeting of: April 25, 2017

Date: April 12, 2017

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Ryan Sundberg

Subject: Letter of Support for the California Department of Transportation's funding request to perform environmental clearance for geotechnical investigation of a potential new alignment of U.S. Highway 101 between Klamath and Crescent City near the area known as Last Chance Grade.

RECOMMENDATION(S): That the Board of Supervisors authorize the Chair to sign the Letter of Support.

SOURCE OF FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION: The California Department of Transportation is requesting funding to perform environmental clearance for geotechnical investigation of a potential new alignment of U.S. Highway 101 between Klamath and Crescent City near the area known as Last Chance Grade. This funding would allow Caltrans to initiate studies and research potential alignments of the highway around Last Chance Grade to protect the safety and economy of Del Norte County and the people and commerce that travels U.S. Highway 101. Caltrans also estimates a significant failure at Last Chance Grade would result in full closure of the route and would cost the local economy an estimated \$130 million per year. Funding for this project is vital.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT: California Department of Transportation.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS: Letter of Support.

Prepared by Kathy Hayes

Signature

REVIEW:

Auditor _____ County Counsel _____ Personnel _____ Risk Manager _____ Other _____

TYPE OF ITEM:

☒ Consent
☐ Departmental
☐ Public Hearing
☐ Other _____

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No. _____

Meeting of: _____

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Upon motion of Supervisor Fennell Seconded by Supervisor Wilson

Ayes Sundberg, Fennell, Bass, Bohn, Wilson
Nays
Abstain
Absent

and carried by those members present, the Board hereby approves the recommended action contained in this Board report.

Dated: Apr. 25, 2017

By:
Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
825 5TH STREET, ROOM 111
EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501 PHONE: (707) 445-7266

April 25, 2017

Bob Alvarado, Chair
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, MS-52
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman Alvarado:

On behalf of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, I am writing in full support of the California Department of Transportation's request for funding to perform environmental clearance for geotechnical investigation of a potential new alignment of U. S. Highway 101 between Klamath and Crescent City near the area known as Last Chance Grade. This funding is a critical step in ensuring the coastal highway does not experience a major failure or require continuation of the constant maintenance of the past several decades.

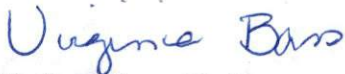
Caltrans has spent well over \$40 million maintaining the current alignment on Last Chance Grade since 1981. Last year, Governor Jerry Brown proclaimed a state of emergency due to damage caused by El Nino storms in Del Norte County. This winter, significant damage occurred at Last Chance Grade, including a new slide which collapsed a lane of the highway, and weeks later, a slide which closed the highway for several hours. Caltrans is actively engaged with the Federal Highway Administration on negotiating the use of Emergency Relief funds to repair the damage and keep essential traffic flowing on the existing roadway.

Our Board is extremely concerned that a significant failure at Last Chance Grade would force a detour of approximately 320 miles or six to eight hours. Caltrans has estimated a full closure of the route would cost the local economy alone \$130 million per year. Humboldt County is part of a stakeholders group convened by Congressman Jared Huffman, D-San Rafael, which is made up of representatives of county governments, tribes, environmental groups, landowners, business and transportation interests that agree a new alignment is necessary. Caltrans is also working closely with resource and permitting agencies and tribes to address environmental and cultural concerns in advance.

The CTC funding under consideration would allow Caltrans to initiate studies and investigations of potential alignments of the highway around Last Chance Grade to protect the safety and economy of both Humboldt and Del Norte Counties and the people and commerce that travels U.S. Highway 101.

Please give this funding request your full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,



Virginia Bass, Chair
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

VB:kh

cc: Congressman Jared Huffman
317 Third Street, Suite #1
Eureka, CA 95501
RE: Last Chance Grade