

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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March 22, 2022

The Honorable Christopher M. Ward
Member, California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 4220
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2120 (Ward): Investing Federal Funding in Local Bridges
As introduced on February 14, 2022 – SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Ward:

The County of El Dorado supports your Assembly Bill 2120, which would ensure a fair and needs-based allocation of bridge formula funding from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). These funds would help close the significant gap between what is needed to repair and replace deteriorated local bridges and the \$300 million per year currently available statewide. The County is currently pursuing funding for 15 bridge projects, but without the additional funding allocated by AB 2120, it could be many years before construction begins for 13 of the bridges.

Specifically, AB 2120 would apply California's historic formula from the prior federal Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program to the distribution of bridge formula funds from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), allocating 55% to local projects. AB 2120 would also require the state to maintain its current commitment of flexible federal highway funding to local bridges. Taken together, these changes would increase federal funding available to local bridges from approximately \$300 million annually to approximately \$800 million annually.

El Dorado County has over 84 locally-owned bridges—more than 27 of which need costly repairs. Despite a typical design life of 75 to 100 years, nearly one-third of our county's bridges are at least 80 years old. There is a statewide significant disparity in the condition of state and local bridges, with 11.5% of local bridges in poor condition compared to only 3.3% of state bridges. At the current rate of funding, the percentage of local bridges in poor condition will climb to above 50% within the next 20 years. Simply preventing further decay in local bridge

conditions would require nearly \$800 million each year—an increase of approximately \$500 million annually.

In El Dorado County, 27 bridges are in need of repair or replacement. Our county has several projects awaiting federal funding, including two projects “ready to advertise”, three projects “nearly ready to advertise” for construction, and 10 eligible projects waiting on the authorization of design funding. Two notable projects are the Mosquito Road Bridge, connecting urban with rural communities and federal forestlands, and the Mount Murphy Road Bridge, located in the middle of Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. Nearly 200,000 school children visit the historic gold discovery site annually and approximately 40,000 of them walk across the Mount Murphy Road bridge during their visit. Both of these bridges have some of the lowest safety ratings and load limits in the state, and both of these bridges serve communities that were evacuated in the past due to the threat of wildfires. It is a terrifying event when a community is being evacuated on a one-lane bridge with substandard load limits. Without federal funding, our county will not be able to complete these much-needed safety improvements.

For these reasons, El Dorado County strongly supports AB 2120. Thank you for your leadership in addressing this important issue for counties.

Sincerely,



Lori Parlin
District IV, Supervisor and Chair
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

cc: Senator Brian Dahle, State Senate, District 1
Assembly Member Frank Bigelow, State Assembly, District 5
Assembly Member Kevin Kiley, State Assembly District 6
The Honorable Laura Friedman, Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee
Julia Kingsley, Consultant, Assembly Transportation Committee
Daniel Ballon, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
David Orosco, Consultant, California State Senate
Chris Lee, Legislative Representative, California State Association of Counties