

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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August 4, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Extension of July 1, 2020 VMT Implementation

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of El Dorado County, we respectfully request a two-year extension to the implementation of the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as part of SB 743.

As you are aware, SB 743 changes the way transportation impacts are identified under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In December 2018, the California Natural Resources Agency completed the rulemaking process to modify the CEQA guidelines for the implementation of SB 743, which includes applying VMT statewide.

The incorporation of VMT is in addition to existing laws which require the quantification and mitigation of air quality impacts. The County is committed to promoting environmental sustainability that strikes a balance with the local economy and connects communities through strategic investments and planned development. Although the implementation of SB 743 comes at a time when the State is facing a housing shortage and significant economic uncertainty, the adoption of VMT will require residential developers to quantify how many miles individuals will drive, which has the potential to increase the cost of a housing development, with the greatest impact to housing developments in remote rural areas that are located farther away from job centers. Furthermore, El Dorado County has a voter-approved General Plan with specific voter-approved transportation policies that quantify impacts based on congestion and Level of Service (LOS). As you are aware, this is often contrary to VMT and therefore poses a legal problem for the County. El Dorado County supports the VMT metric which balances our mobility needs with the achievement of identified greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction. All we are asking is for more time to attempt to create reasonable thresholds that can be quantified with rural-based data to meet GHG reduction as well as our voter-mandated LOS requirements.

For the above reasons, El Dorado County respectfully requests a two-year extension of the VMT implementation that was part of Senate Bill 743. Thank you for your leadership during these unprecedented times. El Dorado County appreciates the dialogue you have always afforded with our County. If we can provide any additional information or should you have any questions regarding the County's request, please contact Rafael Martinez, Director, Department of Transportation, at (530) 641-7533 or rafael.martinez@edcgov.us.

Sincerely,

Brian Veerkamp, Chair
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors