



# FARM BUREAU San Diego County

**The Voice of Local Farmers**

Serving San Diego agriculture since 1914

June 7, 2019

Mr. Hasan Ikhrata  
Executive Director  
The San Diego Association of Governments  
401 B Street, Suite 800  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mr. Ikhrata:

On behalf of the San Diego County Farm Bureau, I would like to inform you that our organization has taken a position in opposition to your proposed modifications to the 2004 TransNet Extension Ordinance (Ordinance) under consideration by SANDAG. In addition to being an unfaithful change to the expectations of the large majority of voters who supported the Ordinance, the changes would provide no benefit to the farm community and, in fact, would be detrimental.

San Diego County Farm Bureau is a non-profit membership organization that acts as the voice for local farmers. Agriculture is an important part of San Diego County's economy with an annual economic value of \$4.7 billion and provision of 16,000 jobs.

There are several reasons for our objections to the proposed change in project funding policy. The nearly 5,000 farms in the county are located in rural, semi-rural, and backcountry areas. Those locations mean that farmers and their employees will not have access to or benefit from transit in commuting or conducting business. Farm products are highly perishable and must move quickly over roads. Farmers live and farm employees work in some of the region's areas most prone to wildfires, which means roads must be capable of carrying large volumes of evacuees. Because employee and farm vehicles travel on rural roads, road safety is of constant concern.

For those reasons TransNet funding, as originally promised, must be spent on improving the roads and highways over which farmers, their families, employees, and products travel. While we have no opposition to transit, fairness and reasonable planning dictate that tax dollars raised for specific purposes should be spent in that manner. The farm community and rural residents have contributed significantly to TransNet and should receive the benefits that were originally promised.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Larson', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Eric Larson  
Executive Director