



May 12, 2009

The Honorable Mike Coffman
US House of Representatives
1508 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Coffman: *Mike*

As Congress prepares to work on the authorization of a new transportation bill to succeed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), on behalf of the RTD, I would like to convey our support for federal investment in the Southwest Corridor Extension as a High Priority Project. The Southwest Corridor Extension is a critical component of RTD's FasTracks program, one of the nation's most successful examples of what mass transit will do to improve the quality of life, environment, and energy efficiency of a region.

The Southwest Corridor Extension is a 2.5-mile light rail line extending south from the existing Southwest Corridor light rail terminus at Santa Fe/Mineral in Littleton to rapidly growing Highlands Ranch in Douglas County. The corridor will increase the number of trips on transit in the heavily congested Santa Fe and C-470 travel corridors and will provide significant transit-oriented development opportunities at the C-470/Lucent Boulevard station. The project will also shorten commute time and provide relief to the currently over-capacity park-n-Ride at the end of the Southwest Corridor.

RTD's financing plan ensures that construction will be underway during the period of the new authorizing legislation. The total estimated cost of the Southwest Corridor Extension is \$165.6 million. RTD's request for \$132.5 million is therefore 80 percent of the total project cost. Local funding commitments for the Southwest Corridor Extension were approved by the voters of the RTD in November 2004 as part of the vote approving FasTracks financing.

RTD has committed to performing a NEPA-level environmental study on all corridors, and the Southwest Corridor Extension is no exception. With public review and input, the final Environmental Evaluation product will be a successful study that will lay the foundation for the ultimate configuration of the Southwest Corridor Extension. The Environmental Evaluation began in early 2008 and is scheduled to be completed in 2009.

The Southwest Corridor Extension is a critical component of RTD's FasTracks program, one of the nation's most successful examples of what mass transit can do to improve the



quality of life, environment, and energy efficiency of a region. I am again pleased to state my support for this important transit project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clarence W. Marsella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Clarence W. Marsella
General Manager and CEO

cc: Representative Diana DeGette
Representative Jared Polis
Representative John Salazar
Representative Betsy Markay
Representative Doug Lamborn
Representative Ed Perlmutter