



Help support high-speed rail and American jobs

The BLET National Division is requesting that all members, their families and friends take the time to support railroaders in California — and American manufacturing and infrastructure workers across multiple states — by signing the White House petition below.

Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao recently delayed approval of a \$647 million dollar federal grant to Caltrain, which puts a hold on the electrification upgrade project that was scheduled to begin the week of March 1, 2017. Delayed approval of the grant immediately halts work, may cause millions of dollars of additional costs, and could jeopardize the entire project.

In a letter dated February 15, 2017, BLET National President Dennis R. Pierce urged Secretary Chao to approve funding for Caltrain electrification. “The \$650 million grant is a key part of the \$2 billion in funding for electrification,” President Pierce wrote. “Your approval of the \$650 million DOT grant also would produce significant employment benefits.”

A copy of President Pierce’s letter is at: http://www.ble-t.org/pr/pdf/DRP_Chao_Caltrain.pdf

The BLET represents the locomotive engineers who operate Caltrain locomotives. Caltrain is a heavily used commuter rail line between Gilroy and San Francisco, Calif., whose ridership has doubled in the past decade and now carries more than 60,000 people per day on its 77-mile line. The electrification upgrade will increase capacity of Caltrain as well as reduce noise and pollution, to say nothing of reducing traffic in a car-choked region. It is expected the electrification project would create over 9,600 jobs in the Bay Area and spread throughout the nation to cities like Salt Lake City, Utah (assembly of new electric trains), Jacksonville, Fla. (signaling operations), Richmond, Va. (power converter and transformer), Hudson, Wisc. (seating and tables), Littleton, Colo. (engineering services), and other locations.

President Donald Trump has pledged that infrastructure and American jobs would be a cornerstone of his administration, yet within a few days of his taking office, his administration has taken steps that would negatively impact nearly 10,000 workers nationwide and also the 60,000 daily users of the Caltrain rail service.

Please take the time to sign the petition below requesting that President Trump reverse Secretary Chao’s decision and grant the funding for Caltrain’s electrification project. The goal is to secure 100,000 signatures by March 20, 2017. Please sign the petition here:

<http://tinyurl.com/hjhn533>

A message from the BLET Mobilization Team