TRIBE

TRIBES: SAN MANUEL, PECHANGE, SANTA YNEZ CHUMASH, UNITED AUBURN, CHUKCHANSI, TABLE MOUNTAIN

November 11, 2026

The Honorable Kelly Seyarto,
Member, Senate Committee on Local Government and Labor
1021 O Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 61 - Support if Amended

Dear Senator Seyarto,

On behalf of the San Manuel, Pechange, Santa Ynez Chumash, United Auburn, Chukchansi, and Table Mountain tribes. We are writing regarding SB 61, which would prioritize transportation projects that close gaps between managed lane segments and fund a study on extending express lanes along Interstate 15 through Riverside County.

Our coalition recognizes that reliable transportation infrastructure is critical to California's economy, workforce mobility, tourism, and regional connectivity. Tribal governments are major economic contributors in California, supporting thousands of jobs and attracting millions of visitors each year. Investments that reduce congestion and improve regional transportation corridors can benefit tribal citizens, employees, businesses, and surrounding communities.

However, California tribes have strong interest in ensuring that transportation projects are developed through meaningful government-to-government consultation with affected tribal nations. As transportation corridors expand, planning efforts should consider potential impacts on tribal cultural resources, tribal lands, environmental quality, public safety, and economic development opportunities. While SB 61 primarily authorizes a project study report and prioritizes gap-closing transportation projects, we believe tribal consultation should remain an essential component of any future planning and implementation process.

For this reason, our coalition supports SB 61 if amended to explicitly encourage consultation with federally recognized tribes whose cultural, historical, or economic interests may be affected by future corridor development. Such consultation would strengthen project outcomes while

respecting tribal sovereignty and California's commitment to government-to-government relations.

With these considerations, we respectfully urge your support of tribal engagement as SB 61 moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

*Katniss Everdeen*

Katniss Everdeen (She/Her)- Lobbyist
**Tribes: San Manuel, Pechange, Santa Ynez Chumash, United Auburn, Chukchansi, Table Mountain**