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July 22, 2019

The Honorable Michael J. Carrozzo, Presiding Judge
Santa Barbara County Superior Court
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**Subject: Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG)
Response to 2018-2019 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
Report, Entitled "Railroad Fatalities in Santa Barbara County."**

Dear Presiding Judge Carrozzo:

On behalf of the SBCAG Board of Directors, please see the attached copy of the SBCAG response to the 2018-2019 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury report, entitled "Railroad Fatalities in Santa Barbara County" submitted in accordance with State Statute.

On July 18, 2019 the SBCAG Board of Directors approved their response to findings 1, 2, 4 and 6 as well as recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 6a.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Lauren Bianchi Klemann, Government Affairs/Public Information Manager for SBCAG at (805) 961-8905 or lbianchiklemann@sbcag.org.

Sincerely,

Marjie Kirn, Executive Director
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments

cc:

Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
Pamela Olsen, Grand Jury Foreperson
Michelle Greene, City Manager, City of Goleta
Paul Casey, City Administrator, City of Santa Barbara
Mona Miyasato, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Bill Brown, Sheriff-Coroner, Santa Barbara County
Scott Spaulding, Director of Rail and Transit Programs, SBCAG

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**“Railroad Fatalities in Santa Barbara County”
2018-2019 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) Response**

Finding 1: Eighty-five percent of railroad-related deaths occurring in Santa Barbara County were pedestrian trespasser incidents that occurred in the High Fatality Zone One from Ortega Hill in Summerland to Milpas Street in Santa Barbara and High Fatality Zone Two from Patterson Avenue to Glen Annie Road in Goleta.

SBCAG Response: SBCAG Agrees with Finding 1.

Recommendation 1: That the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, the County of Santa Barbara and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments meet regularly with Union Pacific Railroad to create a safety plan to reduce trespasser deaths in High Fatality Zones.

SBCAG Response: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented. SBCAG does not have authority over Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Within the next six months, SBCAG will offer to coordinate and host meetings to assist the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, County of Santa Barbara to work with Union Pacific Railroad to discuss development of a safety plan to reduce trespasser deaths in the region. These meetings may also be used for the agencies to discuss how to best coordinate joint efforts to reduce trespassing on private, Union Pacific Railroad property and work with the railroad to address homeless encampments in the rail right-of-way.

Finding 2: A sealed corridor has been used effectively to enhance railroad safety.

SBCAG Response: SBCAG disagrees partially with Finding 2. A sealed corridor program has two primary objectives: to enhance *pedestrian* safety and to enhance *vehicular* safety, particularly at grade crossings, but cannot prevent or eliminate pedestrian access.

Recommendation 2: That the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, the County of Santa Barbara, and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments collaborate with Union Pacific Railroad to develop a sealed corridor from Ortega Hill in Summerland to Glen Annie Road in Goleta.

SBCAG Response: This recommendation requires substantial further analysis to determine the feasibility, practicality, and effectiveness of such a project. A sealed corridor program has two primary objectives: to enhance *pedestrian* safety and to enhance *vehicular* safety, particularly at grade crossings, but cannot prevent or eliminate pedestrian access. Any rail corridor that contains at-grade crossings will be open to pedestrian access to the rail right of way, and thus open to trespassers. Within six months, SBCAG will approach Union Pacific Railroad, the cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta and the County of Santa Barbara to determine each of these respective organizations' interest in pursuing a feasibility study about the development of a sealed corridor for the section of the rail corridor identified by the Grand Jury as a high-fatality zone.

Finding 4: Fencing along the railroad right-of-way in the High Fatality Zones is inadequate or nonexistent.

SBCAG Response: SBCAG disagrees partially with Finding 4. While some sections of the rail corridor identified as high fatality zones have porous or no fencing, other sections in the same zones have well maintained, effective fencing.

Recommendation 4: That the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, the County of Santa Barbara, and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments collaborate with Union Pacific Railroad to repair and install fencing, to prevent easy access to the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way in the High Fatality Zones.

SBCAG Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. SBCAG does not have authority to repair and install fencing in the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Collaboration between local jurisdictions and Union Pacific Railroad to repair and install fencing requires coordination and funding. Within six months, SBCAG will evaluate the level interest by the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, and the County of Santa Barbara to collaborate with Union Pacific Railroad, to repair and install fencing within the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way.

Finding 6: Video surveillance cameras provide increased observation of activity by pedestrian trespassers and homeless encampments within the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way.

SBCAG Response: SBCAG Agrees with Finding 6

Recommendation 6a: That the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, the County of Santa Barbara, and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments encourage Union Pacific Railroad to install and monitor video surveillance cameras on poles every mile within the High Fatality Zone.

SBCAG Response: This recommendation requires substantial further analysis. The area of video surveillance has significant legal, logistical, and financial costs that will need further research. The recommendation for local jurisdictions to encourage Union Pacific to install and monitor video surveillance cameras will not itself result in the installation of cameras or provide increased observation. Within six months, SBCAG will consider a recommendation to be presented before the policy board to encourage Union Pacific Railroad to install and monitor video surveillance cameras on poles every mile within the High Fatality Zone.