

**Representative Mike Levin (CA-49)**  
**Member Day Testimony**  
**House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee**  
**April 14, 2021**

Thank you, Chair DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves, for holding today's Member Day hearing. This Congress, we have a unique opportunity to pass the long-awaited infrastructure package that our constituents have been repeatedly promised. As you assemble the portions of the infrastructure package that fall under the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's jurisdiction, I urge you to incorporate provisions that address the climate crisis, both by making our transportation infrastructure more resilient and by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, I urge you to prioritize regionally and nationally significant mega-projects that build resiliency, such as a key railway relocation project in my district.

President Biden's American Rescue Plan aims to unify and mobilize the country to fight the climate crisis, which it calls one of the great challenges of our time. Strengthening the resilience of our infrastructure is critical as our country experiences the impacts of the climate crisis. In my district, climate change means more intense wildfires, deeper droughts, and rising sea levels. I know that many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have also experienced these impacts, which is why climate resilience has been a significant area of bipartisan cooperation. I commend your committee on the bipartisan progress you have made in this space previously, and I hope it can expand this Congress.

Like in many parts of the country, the rising sea levels in my district have accelerated coastal erosion. This has caused a range of concerning impacts for coastal safety and property, including threats to the integrity of the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor, which is the second busiest intercity passenger rail corridor in the nation and also carries \$1 billion worth of goods annually. A portion of the LOSSAN Rail Corridor in San Diego County runs through the City of Del Mar on bluffs located adjacent to the Pacific Ocean. The Del Mar Bluffs, which support the railroad infrastructure and track-bed, have experienced and continue to be vulnerable to major erosion. Most recently, there were major bluff collapses in March 2021 and December 2020, which necessitated continued emergency work to shore up the bluffs and maintain the integrity of the LOSSAN Rail Corridor.

A significant failure of the bluffs impacting the LOSSAN Rail Corridor for an extended period of time will severely harm the local and regional economy and the ability for individuals to access jobs, schools, and other economic activity centers in Southern California. This corridor is used by commuter and intercity trains, and also supports significant freight rail operations. As such, it is part of the U.S. Strategic Rail Corridor Network (STRACNET) and provides critical service to the 147,000 active duty servicemembers and five major military installations in the San Diego Area.

Our local metropolitan planning organization, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), is executing a project to protect the LOSSAN Rail Corridor by relocating it inland. Significant planning is already complete and SANDAG has also been conducting exploratory

geotechnical work. We ultimately expect the relocation project will cost approximately \$3 billion, while creating tens of thousands of jobs.

I strongly urge you to include funding for resilience projects like the LOSSAN Corridor relocation in the infrastructure package. In particular, you should prioritize regionally and nationally significant mega-projects that improve freight and commuter mobility across all modes, stimulate the economy, provide congestion relief, improve safety, and build resiliency, while considering existing federally-recognized programs such as STRACNET. Additionally, funding should be set aside to support the LOSSAN Rail Corridor specifically, as is done for the Northeast Corridor, the intercity passenger rail corridor that ranks just ahead of LOSSAN in ridership.

The LOSSAN relocation project is a triple win: it creates jobs, bolsters climate resilience, and protects our national security. It is absolutely critical for Southern California.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to working with you on these critical resilience issues during the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress.