

# POLITICO GROUP

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April 13, 2021

To: The Honorable Jose Rodriguez, Chair, Madera County Transportation Commission  
The Honorable April Hogue, Chair, Merced County Association of Governments  
The Honorable Pete Vander Poel, III, Chair, Tulare County Association of Governments  
Patricia Taylor, Executive Director, Madera County Transportation Commission  
Stacie Guzman, Executive Director, Merced County Association of Governments  
Theodore Smalley, Executive Director, Tulare County Association of Governments

From: Kiana Valentine, Partner, Politico Group

Re: **Finish What We Started Campaign – A Call to Action to Complete State Route 99, Invest in the Economy, Improve Safety, and Enhance Quality of Life in California**

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**Background.** Politico Group is pleased for the opportunity to aid the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC), Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG), and the Tulare County Association of Governments (TGAC) in the development and execution of a thoughtful, strategic, and well-rounded campaign to secure the State of California's commitment to "Finish What it Started" and complete State Route 99 (SR 99) to a cohesive six-lane corridor. The following memo outlines key messages, strategies, and milestones critical to achieve success in this effort.

**Messages.** A completed SR 99 will have many and varied positive benefits to the entire state. The campaign's messages must successfully communicate that investing in the corridor has something for everyone. While Politico Group will continue to work with MCTC, MCAG, and TCAG on the development of powerful collateral and data that tells the San Joaquin Valley's story, initial key messages include:

- Agricultural Production. The SR 99 corridor supports the state's geographic and agricultural production center – generating more than \$45 billion in agricultural products annually and providing 25-percent of the nation's food supply.
- Goods Movement. The SR 99 corridor on average supports 1.3 million daily truck trips. Approximately 90-percent of freight through the San Joaquin Valley is moved by truck and those trucks trips primarily occur on SR 99. SR 99 is also part of the Primary National Freight Network and is prioritized in several state transportation plans including the SR 99 Business Plan.
- Economic Vitality and Jobs. In addition to the jobs and economic output from the agricultural sector, over 44 percent of all employment in the San Joaquin Valley is associated with goods movement-dependent industries, which is higher than goods movement related employment in all other regions of California.
- Safety. Eight segments totaling 35 miles out of the 274-mile SR 99 corridor through Merced, Madera, and Tulare counties remain unfunded. These unfinished segments include approximately 12 dangerous bottlenecks along this vital corridor.
- Air Quality and Climate Change. When people, goods, and services sit in congestion, it exacerbates dangerous and unhealthy air quality conditions and contributes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Completing the SR corridor to six-lanes will increase throughput, improve air quality, and reduce harmful GHG emissions.

**Strategies.** Considering the many benefits to a completed SR 99 corridor, our strategy includes robust stakeholder engagement and coalition building, legislative outreach, and the leveraging of important relationships inside the Newsom Administration and Executive Branch. Our key strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Coalition Building. Engage a broad range of stakeholders including business (agriculture, manufacturing, construction, goods movement, etc.), labor, materials and equipment suppliers, California’s seaports, and local and regional government, just to name a few.
- Leveraging Relationships for Strategic Advocacy. MCTC, MCAG, and TCAG have existing relationships with federal, state, and local elected officials that are of tremendous value for such a campaign. We will compliment the campaigns advocacy efforts with our existing and strong relationships at the state level including within the:
  - California State Legislature,
    - San Joaquin Valley Legislative Delegation,
    - Bipartisan Leadership in the Senate and Assembly,
    - Moderate Caucus, and
    - Other members, as identified for strategic purposes,
  - Newsom Administration,
  - California State Transportation Agency,
  - California Department of Transportation,
  - California Transportation Commission, and
  - To the extent necessary and strategic the California Housing and Community Development Department, Governor’s Office and Planning and Research, Strategic Growth Council, and California Air Resources Board.
- Mapping, Data, and Collateral. We will develop persuasive and meaningful collateral including mapping and other important data about safety, economic impacts, etc. to communicate our goals efficiently and effectively.
- Branding, Website, and Social Media. We will work in close coordination with MCTC, MCAG, and TCAG and the development of branding, the buildout of a campaign website, and the use of social media for our advocacy efforts.

**Milestones.** The effort to obtain the state’s commitment to finish SR 99 and secure funding to construct the remaining eight segments will require a sustained multi-year effort. In the near term, we have identified the following key milestones that will lay the foundation for a successful campaign:

- 2021-22 State Budget Augmentation for Transportation Infrastructure (ongoing)
- Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) Methodology Determination (ongoing)
- Inaugural SR 99 Summit in XXXX (June 2021)
- TCEP Target Setting Process (May 2021)
- TCEP Call for Projects (XXXX)
- California Transportation Commission Town Hall (April 2022)
- Second SR 99 Summit (June 2022)

**Contact.** For more information regarding the aforementioned outline for the Finish What We Started Campaign, please contact Kiana Valentine at (916) 444-3770 or [kiana@politicogroup.com](mailto:kiana@politicogroup.com).