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June 8, 2010

Commissioner James Boyd
California Energy Commission
Dockets Office, MS-4
Re: Docket No. 09-ALT-1
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

DOCKET	
09-ALT-1	
DATE	JUN 08 2010
RECD.	JUN 17 2010

Re: Personal Rapid Transit Pilot Demonstration Program

Dear Commissioner Boyd,

I am writing on behalf of the Marin County Board of Supervisors to urge the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program to provide funding for Personal Rapid Transit Pilot Demonstration Projects to assess this promising technology's ultra energy efficiency, greenhouse gas mitigation effectiveness, and potential for congestion reduction.

Our Board has supported a pilot program in Marin County with Unimodal's SkyTran, which is being developed right now at NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California. Unimodal has contacted the CEC directly about potential funding for a demonstration project and we are supportive of their request.

Personal rapid transit (PRT) is a transformational technology that offers a quantum leap in personal mobility. The commercial development of PRT has the potential to deliver high-speed, solar-powered surface transportation at lower costs and with higher efficiency than existing automobile or public transit technologies. PRT offers a broad and sustainable path to key goals, including AB 32 and SB 375, that are both state and national priorities: 1) improved energy efficiency leading to energy independence, 2) reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants and, 3) elimination of urban congestion.

PRT is a not a replacement of automobiles, buses or light rail. Elevated on steel utility poles, PRT can operate without streets and highways. PRT alignments can be built on easements the width of a sidewalk. This gives PRT has the potential to expand transit oriented development opportunities by providing a transit alternative to the many locations where buses or light rail would be impractical. By getting people out of their

cars, PRT can reclaim unused parking spaces for better land uses. From a service perspective, PRT combines the best features of automobiles and public transit by providing high volume, on-demand, point-to-point service. Compared to other transportation solutions, PRT is the most energy efficient per passenger mile traveled and has the greatest potential to reduce auto vehicle miles traveled resulting in decreased greenhouse gases and other pollutant (NOx) impacts.

Because of its flexibility, PRT has the potential to serve cities as a feeder system to the California High Speed Rail system and locally to Marin's bus and commuter train system. The growth of the PRT industry in California could serve as a jobs and manufacturing engine and develop into a major export industry for the state and the nation.

The funding of a PRT demonstration project is consistent with the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program's policy of demonstrating emerging technologies to achieve full commercial viability. In this case, the proposed PRT project would build and demonstrate a commercial PRT system to obtain critical evaluation data and provide the basis for a comparative analysis with other vehicle types.

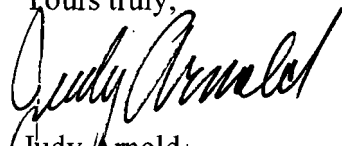
First and second generation PRT technologies are proven and have been demonstrated in Europe and Asia. The Next Generation system under development at NASA has already demonstrated performance breakthroughs. Several university programs in the United States are researching advanced power electronics systems for PRT that capture solar and wind energy and use today's stationary batteries and fuel cells for storage.

In conclusion, PRT has the highest likelihood of providing a comprehensive solution that addresses all three vital goals of California public policy: improved energy efficiency, decreased greenhouse gases *and* congestion reduction.

Of all the surface transportation technology options currently being funded, PRT has the fewest number of technological and financial hurdles in meeting the program's broadest goals in the shortest amount of time.

The California Energy Commission's Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program has a historic opportunity to bring jobs and manufacturing to California by demonstrating this critical technology and becoming a world leader in this emerging global industry.

Yours truly,



Judy Arnold
President, Marin Board of Supervisors