

April 30, 2003

The Honorable Randy "Duke" Cunningham
U.S. House of Representatives, 50th District
2350 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515-0550

Dear Congressman Cunningham:

To meet the needs of the growing business community in San Diego, the completion of several critical freeway improvement projects during this decade is essential. One of the most important projects that needs your support is the funding for the two missing connectors at the State Route 56 (SR-56)/Interstate 5 (I-5) interchange.

SR-56 will provide a much-needed link between the I-15 and I-5 freeways, connecting the communities of inland San Diego with those of the coast near Carmel Valley. Through the leadership of SANDAG, the San Diego City Council, the County Board of Supervisors and Caltrans, the middle segment of SR-56 is scheduled to open in 2004. Unfortunately, the full benefit of this east-west freeway connection will not be realized until the missing connectors are in place.

The past several years have brought tremendous growth in the Carmel Valley area, including new homes and employment centers. Continued growth in this important North County region is contingent on the connectors being built. If the connectors are not completed by 2008, approximately 6,500 residential units (including more than 1,000 "affordable" homes) that will house at least 17,000 people near the SR-56/I-5 interchange will be delayed or forced to other parts of San Diego County or beyond. Transferring development of these units to other areas will only contribute to the growing congestion on regional freeways, and lead to increased infrastructure costs that go well beyond the cost of the connectors.

The funding of the two missing connectors is vital to the long-term growth and prosperity of the San Diego region, and your assistance in securing funding for this project will benefit San Diegans for years to come.

Sincerely,



Gene Rapisardi
Director, Commercial Sales, South Market