April 4, 2022

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

My name is Fonna Forman. I am the Chair of the Committee on Campus Climate Change at UC San Diego, an Academic Senate body charged with bringing UCSD through the energy transition with the speed and urgency that the science demands. I write today to urge you to support the university’s application for $25m in funding requested through the RAISE discretionary grant program. Transit is the great environmental design problem of our region. The full integration of last-mile solutions into the public transit network is an important step towards getting people out of their cars and into the new trolley that runs from the US Mexico border to campus.

As someone who works on cross-border issues, including migration and housing, I am particularly interested in the direct and indirect benefits of this project for the communities of the South Bay and across the most-trafficked international crossing in the world. Making the new trolley from the San Ysidro port of entry more viable is of direct benefit to those hundreds of people who cross over from Tijuana every day to work at and around UCSD, while the potential impact on particulate emissions is an indirect benefit to the health of the communities who live near the freeway. This project brings public transit and electric mobility together in the name of combating climate change and advancing environmental justice.

Almost half of all greenhouse gas emissions in San Diego County are generated by people driving cars on our freeways. This is a very deep problem, and the answers have to be sought at every scale. We think of the local energy transition as composed of a mosaic of different pieces, enacted at the institutional, municipal, regional and federal levels. The Voight Electric Mobility Hub is a bright tile in the mosaic, and we hope that you will help us achieve this grand design by approving the funding for this one piece.

Sincerely,

Fonna Forman, Chair
Committee on Campus Climate Change