April 18, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

In Support of the UC San Diego Voigt Electric Mobility Hub Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing on behalf of the Associated Students of the University of California San Diego (ASUCSD), in support of funding from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program to the UC San Diego Voigt Electric Mobility Hub project.

The ASUCSD represent more than 32,000 undergraduate students enrolled at the University of California San Diego. The elected and appointed representatives of the ASUCSD, representing those students, believe that this project will serve to significantly enhance the quality of life for students here. Our mission is to improve and advocate for the student experience at UC San Diego. The Voigt Electric Mobility Hub is a keystone in our vision to create a carbon neutral, healthy, and safe campus community for all students.

The project will serve both to improve mobility options for students, and preserve healthy futures for students by reducing the environmental impact of transportation to, and within, the campus.

The future Voigt Electric Mobility Hub supports renewable and multimodal transportation options, providing a crucial link of transit, active transportation, and electric automobiles. This transportation trifecta is critical to improving student mobility. Our region and our nation cannot afford to continue gas-powered, automobile-focused, transportation. The project will help decarbonize transportation to UC San Diego, and reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions. This directly improves student quality of life.
Furthermore, tens of thousands of students live on-campus, and in the immediate vicinity of campus. The project will serve to quickly electrify our campus bus transit system, which is the backbone of intracampus mobility on our campus of over 1,000 acres. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is critical in sustaining healthy air quality in our cross-border region, and slow climate change. Removing polluting vehicles from our campus roadways is a pivotal step in supporting the health of our many students who live and depend on transit to go to class, work, study, and have fun.

In addition, the San Diego-Tijuana region is broadly impacted by housing shortages and a lack of sustainable transportation choices. The La Jolla neighborhood in particular, where our campus is located, does not sufficiently meet the housing needs of students. Thus, many students must commute long distances to the campus. The Voigt Electric Mobility Hub will help ensure that these commuter students can come to campus in an environmentally friendly way - either on light rail, an electric bus, or in an electric vehicle. This will open the doors to greater opportunity for students, with the ability to connect to more affordable and inclusive housing options throughout the region. This will represent a transformation of mobility options for students - greatly improving our quality of life.

The Associated Students also strongly support the development of the Transportation administration and training center sited within the Voigt Electric Mobility Hub project. The Associated Students and UC San Diego Transportation have a decades-long history of a close working relationship. Pre-pandemic, years of our surveys of students showed transportation-related challenges as the number one factor impacting the student experience. Since the formation of Associated Students in 1967, we have worked every year, hand-in-hand with Transportation, to develop numerous programs promoting sustainable transportation. These programs have worked to incentivize transit use, educate students about transportation safety, and create innovative new solutions to reduce the carbon intensity of student transportation. In fact, in 1969, UC San Diego was the first university or college in the nation to encourage public transportation use by partnering with a transit agency to allow university affiliates to ride for free. That partnership continues to this day. Together, these programs have benefitted hundreds of thousands of students, and the Voigt Electric Mobility Hub will help us continue to multiply those impacts.
The improvements proposed in this application will serve to significantly enhance the quality of life of students at UC San Diego, for many years to come. On behalf of all students at UC San Diego, I implore your consideration of this grant. Students are looking forward to the development of the Voigt Electric Mobility Hub.

With gratitude,

Manu Agni
President, Associated Students
UC San Diego