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September 13, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Signature on Senate Bill 69 (McGuire)

Dear Governor Newsom:

The City of Arcata is requesting your signature on SB 69, which will transition the North Coast Railroad Authority into the Great Redwood Trail Agency once and for all, and transfer their property and assets in Marin and Sonoma counties to the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART).

SB 69 is a follow up bill to the successful SB 1029 from 2018, the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) Closure and Transition to Trail Act. SB 1029 set up a process to transition the 300+ mile, mostly dilapidated and largely inoperative rail line into a trail system that runs through some of the wildest and most scenic landscapes in the United States. This north coast track runs from San Francisco Bay in Marin County, through Sonoma, Mendocino, Trinity and then to Humboldt Bay in the north.

SB 69 is the next logical step in dismantling the NCRA and help create financial stability for the new agency and provide for a stronger partner in SMART to help build out the Great Redwood Trail. Thanks to your signature on SB 129 this year, there is funding in place to ensure this agency will get off on the right foot and be successful in railbanking the right of way and move forward on the Trail masterplanning, environmental review and buildout.

The City of Arcata deeply appreciates all of the hard work your administration has done over the last several years to dissolve NCRA and move forward with the trail. Unwinding a 30-year-old failed agency has not been easy, but the results are a win for the state, local economies who are dependent on outdoor recreation, and for locals and outdoor enthusiasts alike who will flock to the Trail to enjoy a world class hiking and biking experience.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (707) 822-5953.

Respectfully,

Brett Watson, Mayor
City of Arcata

cc:

Senator Mike McGuire, Senator.McGuire@senate.ca.gov

Congressman Jared Huffman, John.Driscoll@mail.house.gov, Ciara.Emery@mail.house.gov

Assembly Member Jim Wood, Ruth.Valenzuela@asm.ca.gov

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