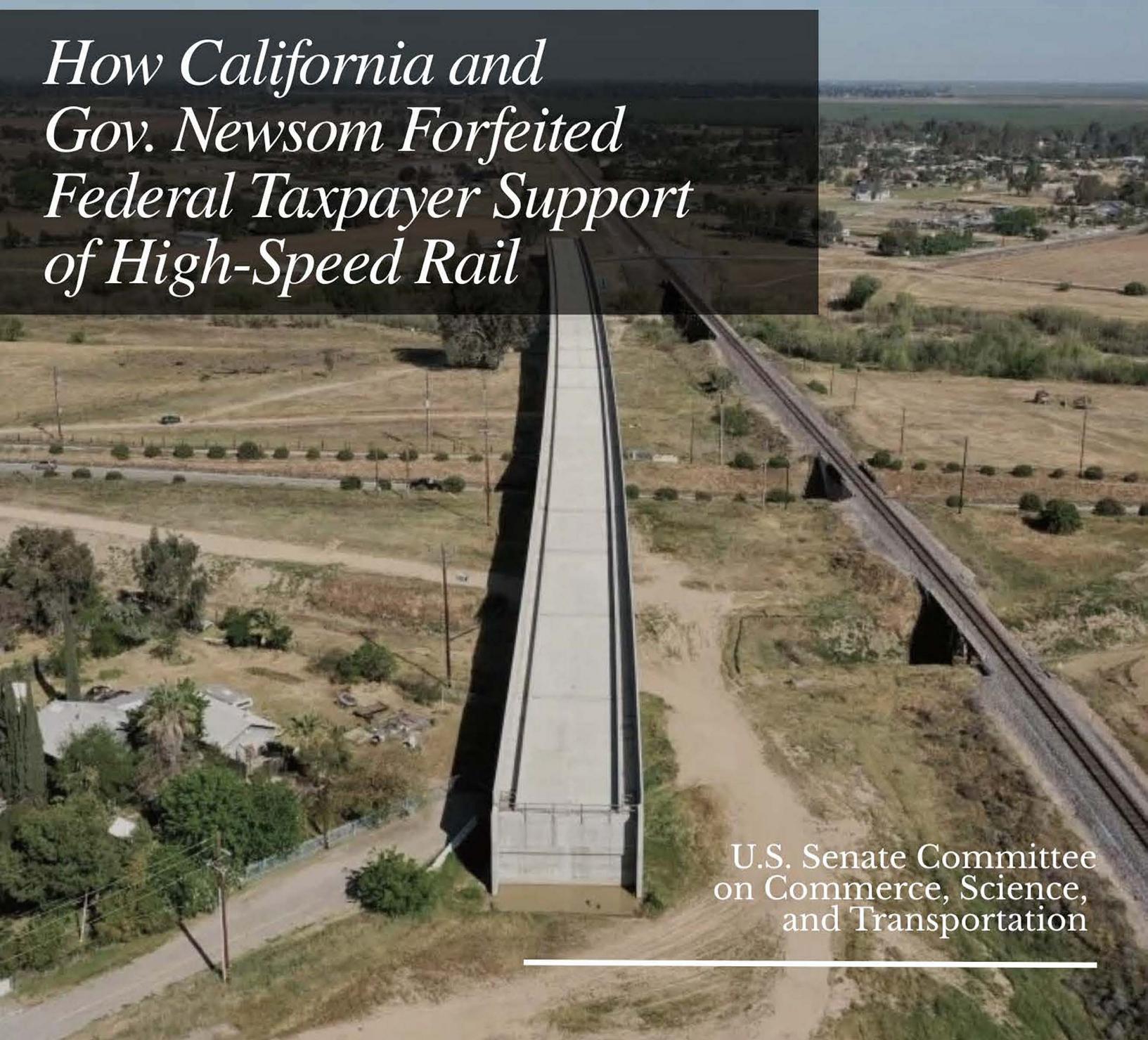


A TRAIN TO NOWHERE:

*How California and
Gov. Newsom Forfeited
Federal Taxpayer Support
of High-Speed Rail*

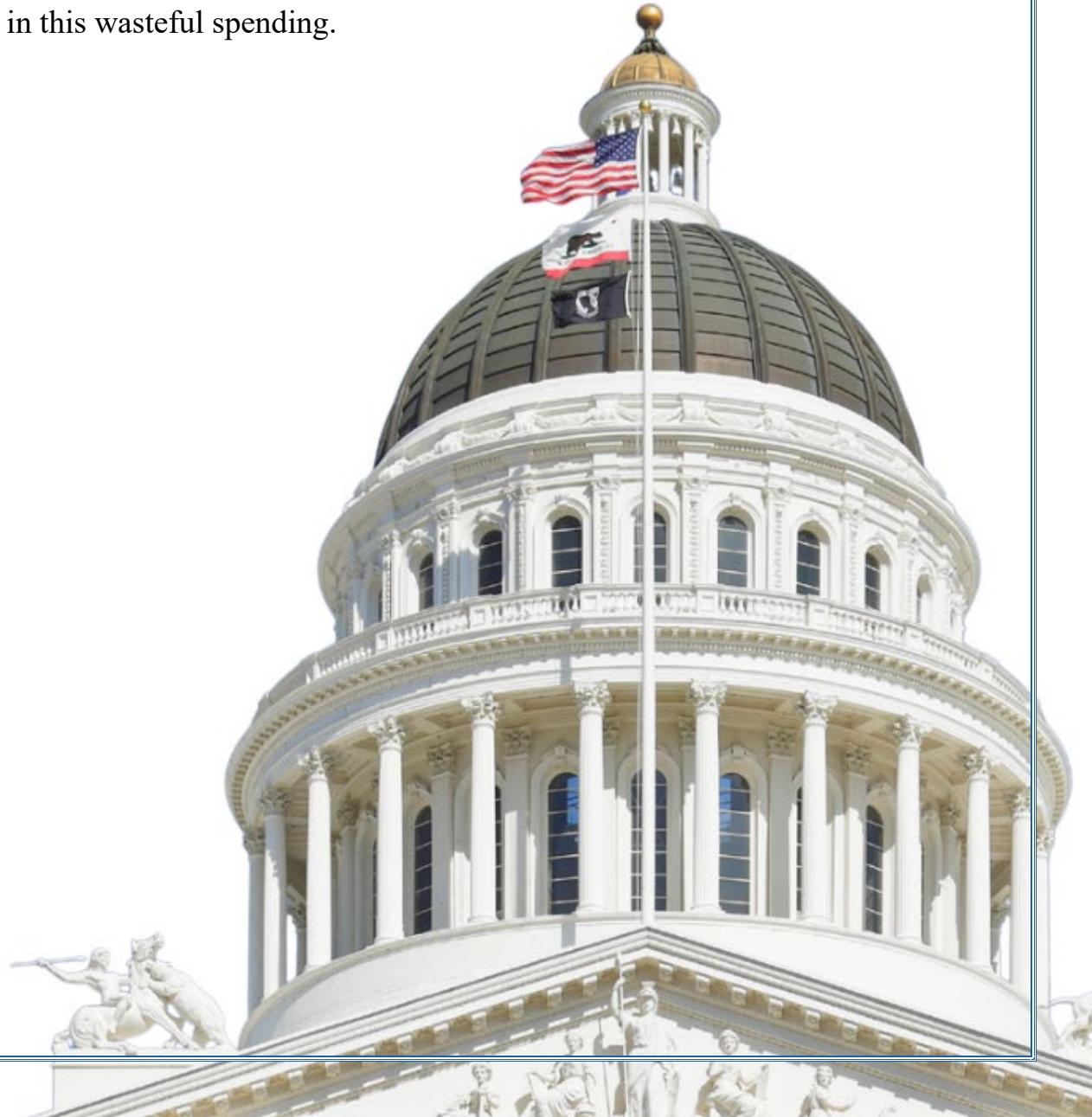


U.S. Senate Committee
on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation

Photo Credit: CA High-Speed Rail Authority

Executive Summary

California high-speed rail reflects a pattern of ambitious policymaking divorced from practical reality—one encouraged by Democratic policymakers in Sacramento and Washington over the past two decades. In both the Northeast Corridor and California, Democratic administrations pushed major rail projects without securing financing or viable infrastructure, leading to chronic delays, runaway costs, and few tangible benefits. Under Governor Gavin Newsom, the California high-speed rail project remains a clear failure: not a single train is operating after a quarter of a century and \$2.6 billion in federal funds. Moreover, the much-maligned high-speed rail line may prove costly even after it is in service. The California High-Speed Rail Authority now admits its core Merced-to-Bakersfield segment will not be profitable when it opens. Simply put, Congress is right to rein in this wasteful spending.



Introduction

On December 22, 2025, Senator Ted Cruz, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation (Committee), released an investigative report entitled *“Amtrak Joe” Pushed for High-Speed Rail on the Northeast Corridor: He Put the Train Before the Tracks.*¹ Chairman Cruz’s report explained how the Obama-Biden administration pressured Amtrak to spend billions on so-called “high-speed” NexGen Acela trainsets for the Northeast Corridor (NEC) without a credible plan to upgrade the corridor’s aging track for high-speed service.² The trainsets currently operate more slowly than the original Acela trains.³ And that’s after a four-year delay that cost American taxpayers an additional \$287 million.⁴

Chairman Cruz’s report also revealed how the procurement itself was delayed by the Obama-Biden administration’s push for Amtrak to jointly acquire a high-speed trainset with the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA).⁵ A joint procurement ignored manufacturers’ recommendations and clear differences between the NEC—with some segments dating back to the 1830s—and California’s not-yet built high-speed rail system.⁶ While this stalled NextGen Acela’s development, it was par for the course for CHSRA. The authority’s lethargic progress on high-speed rail in California, including for the past seven years under Governor Gavin Newsom, exhibits just how much *worse* the Acela development process could have been had Amtrak partnered with CHSRA as the Obama-Biden administration wanted.

In this addendum to the Committee’s NextGen Acela report, the Committee examines how countless delays and billions of dollars in spending fueled CHSRA’s high-speed rail boondoggle.

¹ See Press Release, U.S. Senate Comm. on Com., Sci., and Transp., Pressured by Obama, Biden, Amtrak Spent Millions on Slower Acelas (Dec. 22, 2025), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/2025/12/pressured-by-obama-biden-amtrak-spent-millions-on-slower-acelas>.

² See S. COMM. ON COM., SCI., & TRANSP., “AMTRAK JOE” PUSHED FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL, HE PUT THE TRAIN BEFORE THE TRACKS (2025), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/CBB99F68-5094-4E74-AE0C-476DD93AFA02> [hereinafter 2025 AMTRAK REPORT].

³ *Id.* at 1, 35–36.

⁴ *Id.* at 2, 39.

⁵ *Id.* at 19.

⁶ *Id.* at 16, 18–19.

Most notably, after more than a quarter of a century and \$6.8 billion in awarded federal funds (\$4.2 billion of which President Trump rescinded in 2025), not a single high-speed train is operational in California.⁷ Indeed, many observers are unsure if the project will ever be operational.⁸

Delays from the Start

CHSRA's delays started early. In 2009 and 2010, the Obama-Biden administration's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) awarded a combined almost \$3.4 billion to CHSRA for a portion of the planning and construction of the Central Valley Segment.⁹ At that time, CHSRA's business plan "assumed" that Phase 1 of the project, spanning from San Francisco to Los Angeles, would be completed in 2030 and cost at most \$33.6 billion.¹⁰ Four years later, still before the Amtrak-CHSRA joint procurement, the estimated total cost of Phase 1 more than doubled to \$68 billion.¹¹

Nor have things improved in the 16 years since the Obama-Biden administration gave the first federal grants to CHSRA.



Robert Gauthier/ Los Angeles Times

⁷ See *Federal Grants*, CHSRA, <https://hsr.ca.gov/about/funding/federal-grants/> (last visited Feb. 2, 2026); CHSRA, FINANCIAL PLAN, (Nov. 2, 1999), <https://perma.cc/47WH-YL4K>; *How Much of California High Speed Rail is Built?*, LEGAL CLARITY (Dec. 14, 2025), <https://legalclarity.org/how-much-of-california-high-speed-rail-is-built>.

⁸ See Letter from Benjamin M. Belnap, Inspector Gen., High Speed Rail, Off. of the Inspector Gen., to the Governor of California, President pro Tempore of the Senate, and Speaker of the Assembly (Apr. 28, 2025), <https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/OIG-Review-of-2025-Project-Update-Report-A11Y.pdf> (concluding that until CHSRA "establishes and presents its procurement strategy and timeline, it cannot be certain that the efforts discussed in the report will be relevant, despite the report's clear implications that they represent progress."); Benton Graham, *Billions Spent, Miles to Go: The Story of California's Failure to Build High-Speed Rail*, LAIST (Sept. 15, 2025), <https://laist.com/news/climate-environment/california-high-speed-rail-failure>; Press Release, U.S. Dep't of Transp., Trump's Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy Pulls the Plug on \$4B for California High Speed Rai's Train to Nowhere (July 16, 2025), <https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/trumps-transportation-secretary-sean-p-duffy-pulls-plug-4b-california-high-speed>; Press Release U.S. Dep't of Transp., Trump's Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy Cancels California's Additional Rail Fantasy Projects (Aug. 26, 2025), <https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/trumps-transportation-secretary-sean-p-duffy-cancels-californias-additional-rail>.

⁹ *Federal Grants*, CHSRA, *supra* note 7.

¹⁰ CHSRA, CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN BUS. PLAN, at 5, 23 (Nov. 2008), https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/docs/about/business_plans/BPlan_2008_FullRpt.pdf.

¹¹ CHSRA, CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROGRAM REVISED 2012 BUS. PLAN, at 3-1-3-2 (Apr. 2012), https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/BPlan_2012_rpt.pdf.

As **Table 1** below shows, the project's timeline and costs steadily ticked up. CHSRA now estimates the cost of just Phase 1 to be \$128 billion.¹² But Phase 1 will not be completed in 2030 as previously promised.¹³ CHSRA's 2025 Supplemental Project Update now estimates that Phase 1 will be completed "by 2038 to 2039."¹⁴ CHSRA blames delays on democracy, saying that only centralized countries like China or Taiwan could build high speed railways quickly through central planning.¹⁵ CHSRA says its timelines should be "treated as aspirational rather than binding."¹⁶

President Biden Doubles Down on CHSRA's Failed Project

Despite the ballooning costs and expanding timeline, President Biden and Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg sank another \$3.1 billion in grants into the California high-speed rail money pit in 2023.¹⁷ To make sense of those grant awards, then-Ranking Member Cruz and the Committee, in partnership with the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and Chairman Sam Graves, sent a letter to Secretary Buttigieg on May 29, 2024, requesting DOT provide documents and information related to subsidies granted to CHSRA.¹⁸

While the Biden-Harris administration's FRA provided a partial response to the committees, it



Robert Gauthier/ Los Angeles Times via Getty Images

dodged key questions and refused to produce documents related to DOT's review of California's struggling high-speed rail efforts.¹⁹

¹² CHSRA, 2024 BUS. PLAN, at 69 (2024), <https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024-Business-Plan-FINAL.pdf>.

¹³ CHSRA, CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN BUS. PLAN, *supra* note 10, at 5.

¹⁴ CHSRA, 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL PROJECT UPDATE REPORT, at v (2025), <https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Project-Update-Report-SUP-FINAL-081925-A11Y.pdf>.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 75 ("China and Taiwan demonstrated efficient timelines due to centralized planning and streamlined land acquisition. Democratic nations such as the United States, UK, and Japan faced delays due to legal processes, public consultation, and stringent environmental reviews.").

¹⁶ *Id.* at 22.

¹⁷ *Federal Grants*, CHSRA, *supra* note 7.

¹⁸ Letter from Sen. Cruz, Ranking Member, S. Comm. on Com., Sci. & Transp., & Rep. Graves, Chairman, H. Comm. on Transp. & Infrastructure, to Sec'y Buttigieg, U.S. Dep't of Transp. (May 29, 2024), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/5A2E0E5F-4F8B-48D4-8075-AEF93DE61922>.

¹⁹ See Letter from Amit Bose, FRA Adm'r, to Sen. Cruz, Ranking Member, S. Comm. on Commerce, Sci. & Transp., & Rep. Graves, Chairman, H. Comm. on Transp. & Infrastructure (Aug. 5, 2024) (on file Comm. staff).

Table 1— Timeline of CHSRA’s Promises and Federal Funding

Year	Estimated Costs	Phase 1 Completion
1999	CHSRA commissions a funding plan that estimates the cost of the 670-mile high-speed rail project from San Francisco/Sacramento to Los Angeles/San Diego with additional extensions at \$24.97 billion . ²⁰	2016
2005	A new CHSRA budget estimates the costs to be at most \$37 billion depending on track alignment and station options. ²¹	2020
2006	CHSRA increases its estimate for constructing the entire high-speed rail system to \$45 billion . ²²	N/A
2008	CHSRA pares back its ambitions and begins focusing on a segment of high-speed rail it calls Phase 1, running from San Francisco to Los Angeles (not including earlier plans for routes to San Diego and Sacramento). ²³ Phase 1 will cost at most \$33.63 billion , nearly \$10 billion more than the original estimate for the entire project. ²⁴	2030
2010–2011	The Obama-Biden administration’s FRA subsidizes CHSRA with \$2.5 billion from the 2009 stimulus (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act), \$929 million for the Central Valley Segment, and another \$616 million originally designated for projects in other states. ²⁵	N/A
2012	A CHSRA budget estimates the cost of Phase 1 at \$98.1 billion . To decrease cost, CHSRA considers blending high-speed rail with low-speed commuter rails already built in urban areas. Even then, it estimates costs at \$68.4 billion for Phase 1. ²⁶	2029
2014	CHSRA’s 2014 Business Plan estimates a slight decrease in the cost of Phase 1 to \$67.6 billion due to <i>removing service</i> to Anaheim. ²⁷	2028
2016	CHSRA’s 2016 Business Plan provides a revised estimate of \$64.2 billion and a promise to restore single-seat service all the way to Anaheim. ²⁸	2028
2018	CHSRA’s budget estimations for Phase 1 skyrocket by 50 percent to \$98.1 billion . ²⁹	2033

²⁰ CHSRA, FINANCIAL PLAN, *supra* note 7, at 2, 18, 21.

²¹ CHSRA, USDOT FRA, FINAL PROGRAM ENV’T IMPACT REPORT/ENV’T IMPACT STATEMENT (EIR/EIS) FOR THE PROPOSED CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN SYSTEM VOLUME I: REPORT, at S-5, S-2 (Aug. 2005), https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/docs/programs/eir-eis/State_Wide_EIR_EIS_Volume_1_Part_1_of_3.pdf.

²² DEBRA BROWN, CAL. SEC’Y OF STATE, SUPP. OFFICIAL VOTER INFO. GUIDE, at 5 (Nov. 4, 2008), <https://vig.cdn.sos.ca.gov/2008/general/pdf-guide/suppl-complete-guide.pdf>.

²³ See CHSRA, CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN BUS. PLAN, *supra* note 10, at 16.

²⁴ *Id.* at 19, 5

²⁵ *Federal Grants*, CHSRA, *supra* note 7; Press Release, CHSRA, High-Speed Rail Authority Approves State Matching Funds to Extend Backbone of Statewide System (Dec. 20, 2010), https://web.archive.org/web/20101226173825/http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/pr_approvesstatematch.aspx9.

²⁶ CHSRA, CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROGRAM REVISED 2012 BUS. PLAN, *supra* note 11, at 2-30, 3-1.

²⁷ CHSRA, CONNECTING CALIFORNIA 2014 BUS. PLAN, at 36, 91 (Apr. 30, 2014), https://www.hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/docs/about/business_plans/BPlan_2014_Business_Plan_Final.pdf.

²⁸ CHSRA, CONNECTING AND TRANSFORMING CALIFORNIA, 2016 BUS. PLAN, at 65, 112, 121 (May 1, 2016), https://www.hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/docs/about/business_plans/2016_BusinessPlan.pdf.

²⁹ CHSRA, 2018 BUS. PLAN, at 33, 36, 49 (June 1, 2018), https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/2018_BusinessPlan.pdf.

Table 1 (continued)

Year	Estimated Costs	Phase 1 Completion
2019	The first Trump administration rescinds the \$929 million grant awarded by the Obama-Biden administration. ³⁰	N/A
2020	CHSRA increases its high-end estimate to \$99.88 billion for Phase 1. ³¹	2033
2021	The Biden-Harris administration restores the \$929 million grant to CHSRA previously rescinded by President Trump. ³²	N/A
2022	Only two years later, CHSRA's Phase 1 cost range rises to \$113.2 billion at the high end. ³³	2033
2023	The Biden-Harris administration makes an additional \$3.1 billion grant to CHSRA. ³⁴	N/A
2024	CHSRA's most recent business plan estimates the base cost of Phase 1 to be \$106 billion or up to \$128 billion . ³⁵	Not Estimated ³⁶
2025	The Trump administration rescinds over \$4 billion in FRA grant awards to CHSRA to complete Phase 1. ³⁷	2038 to 2039 ³⁸

President Trump Rescinds Flawed Grants to CHSRA

After President Trump's election in 2024, the dynamic changed. Realizing that California high-speed rail progressed well behind schedule and over budget, Trump's FRA announced that it would review whether CHSRA was complying with the terms of its \$929 million grant restored by the Biden-Harris administration in 2021 or the additional \$3.1 billion provided in 2023.³⁹

After reviewing documents and CHSRA's work to date, the Trump administration confirmed what seemed obvious based on CHSRA's history: CHSRA was going to miss its own deadline to

³⁰ Letter from Ronald L. Batory, Adm'r, FRA, to Brian Kelly, Dir., CHSRA (May 16, 2019), https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/fra_net/18618/CHSRA%20-%20FY%2010%20Agreement%20-%20Final%20Decision%20-%20Signed%20-%205-16-2019.pdf.

³¹ CHSRA, 2020 BUS. PLAN, at 108, 133 (2020), https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2020_Business_Plan.pdf.

³² Derek Francis et al., *Biden Restores \$929 Million for California High-Speed Rail Withheld by Trump*, REUTERS (June 11, 2021), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/biden-administration-restores-929-mln-california-high-speed-rail-2021-06-11/>.

³³ CHSRA, 2022 BUS. PLAN, at 79, 84 (2022), <https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/2022-Business-Plan-FINAL-A11Y.pdf>.

³⁴ Press Release, CHSRA, New Release: High-Speed Rail Authority to Receive Record \$3.1 Billion from Biden Administration, (Dec. 5, 2023), <https://hsr.ca.gov/2023/12/05/news-release-high-speed-rail-authority-to-receive-record-3-1-billion-from-biden-administration/>.

³⁵ CHSRA, 2024 BUS. PLAN, *supra* note 12, at 69.

³⁶ CHSRA estimated that track between only Merced and Bakersfield would start operations "between 2030 and 2033" but did not estimate when Phase I, from San Francisco to Los Angeles, would be completed. *Id.* at 28.

³⁷ Press Release, Duffy Pulls the Plug, *supra* note 7; Press Release, Duffy Cancels California's Additional Rail Fantasy, *supra* note 7.

³⁸ CHSRA, 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL PROJECT UPDATE REPORT, *supra* note 14, at v.

³⁹ Letter from Kyle Fields, Chief Counsel, FRA, to Ian Choudri, CEO, CHSRA (Feb. 20, 2025), <https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/2025-02/FRA%20Chief%20Counsel%20Letter%20to%20Mr.%20Ian%20Choudri%202.20.25.pdf>.

have the 171-mile Merced to Bakersfield track (the Early Operation Segment or EOS) running by 2033.⁴⁰

But CHSRA guaranteed the FRA it would meet that deadline as a condition of receiving the federal grants.⁴¹

On July 16, 2025, convinced that the federal government should not give taxpayer money to projects that do not meet their promised goals, Trump's FRA announced it would terminate the grant awards to CHSRA and rescind any funds that were not yet disbursed.⁴² CHSRA objected.⁴³ Following through on its promise, on August 26, 2025, the FRA announced it was rescinding an additional \$175 million in federal funds for the failed project, including \$89.6 million for the Merced Extension.⁴⁴ As of the date of this report, it is clear CHSRA will not finish the EOS segment by 2033 given that:

- CHSRA missed its October 2024 deadline to procure trainsets for the EOS. CHSRA then promised FRA that it would procure the trainsets by July 2025 only to miss that deadline as well. Remember that CHSRA started its train procurement process alongside Amtrak *in 2013*. As of the writing of this report, 13 years later, CHSRA has still not agreed with any manufacturer to procure high-speed trains.⁴⁵ Moreover, if CHSRA signed with a manufacturer tomorrow but the train sets took as long as the NextGen Acelas did to enter into service, the trains would not start running until 2035, two years after CHSRA's supposed deadline.
- FRA estimates CHSRA needs another \$9 billion to finish the now-projected \$36.75 billion EOS.⁴⁶ This funding gap will likely stall or at least delay work for periods before 2033. Even CHSRA's more consistent funding sources, like California's cap-and-trade

⁴⁰ See Letter from Drew Feeley, Acting Adm'r, FRA, to Ian Choudri, CEO, CHSRA at 2–3, 8–9 (July 16, 2025), <https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/2025-07/FRA%20Acting%20Administrator%20Feeley%20Letter%20to%20Mr.%20Ian%20Choudri%207.16.25.pdf>

(Termination of Cooperative Agreements No. FR-HSR-0118-12 & No. 69A36524521070FSPCA, describing requirements of FY10 and FSP Agreements) [hereinafter Termination of Cooperative Agreements Letter].

⁴¹ *Id.* at 2, 59; Termination of Cooperative Agreements Letter, *supra* note 40, at 7–8, 11–12 (describing requirements of FY10 and FSP Agreements).

⁴² Termination of Cooperative Agreements Letter, *supra* note 40, at 1–2.

⁴³ Letter from Ian Choudri, CEO, CHSRA, to Drew Feeley, Acting Adm'r, FRA (June 11, 2025), <https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/CHRSA-Initial-Response-6-11-25.pdf>; Letter from Ian Choudri, CEO, CHSRA, to Drew Feeley, Acting Adm'r, FRA (July 7, 2025), <https://hsr.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/CHSRA-30-Day-Response-to-FRA-7.7.2025-A11Y.pdf>; Press Release, Governor Gavin Newsom, California Sues to Stop Trump's Politically Motivated Attack on High-Speed Rail (July 17, 2025), <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/07/17/california-sues-to-stop-trumps-politically-motivated-attack-on-high-speed-rail/>.

⁴⁴ Press Release, U.S. Dep't of Transp., *supra* note 37.

⁴⁵ Letter from Drew Feeley, Acting Adm'r, FRA, to Ian Choudri, CEO, CHSRA, at 16 (June 4, 2025), <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2025-06/FRA%20Letter%20%20Enclosure%20to%20Mr.%20Ian%20Choudri%206.4.25.pdf> [hereinafter Notice of Proposed Determination and Compliance Review Report].

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 16; CHSRA, 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL PROJECT UPDATE REPORT, *supra* note 14, at 2.

program, provide volatile amounts of funding that cannot be relied upon.⁴⁷ In its 2025 project update, CHSRA pointed to over a dozen “ancillary revenue opportunities,” resorting to making money doing everything *except* running a high-speed train.⁴⁸

- CHSRA underestimates how long it will take to electrify a 119-mile segment of the EOS and the budget required to do so. In comparison, electrifying a route from San Francisco to San Jose, which is half as long as the 119-mile route, took Caltrain *seven years* and almost twice CHSRA’s proposed budget of \$1.4 billion.⁴⁹
- Political, legal, and capacity realities at CHSRA have led to substantial construction delays and cost overruns in building the Merced to Bakersfield EOS. Those realities will continue to hamstring CHSRA. For example, CHSRA had to build new farmworker housing in Wasco, California because the city demanded current housing be farther away from the planned high-speed tracks. With little authority to resist the city’s demands, CHSRA paid \$10 million to relocate the housing and then sought a federal grant for another \$24 million to remove the blighted former housing project.⁵⁰

After the FRA’s well-documented decision, CHSRA, backed by California Governor Gavin Newsom, sued the Trump administration at first.⁵¹ But on December 23, 2025, CHSRA voluntarily dismissed its suit and said it will move forward without federal funds, allowing the FRA to reassign the funds to more worthy infrastructure causes.⁵² CHSRA’s dismissal is a tacit admission that its lawsuit was doomed and that the Trump administration was within its rights to rescind the grant award.

Perhaps more concerning than continued delays, in its most recent 2025 project update, CHSRA admitted that the \$36.75 billion EOS from Merced to Bakersfield would not be profitable, and therefore, unable to cover its total operational expenses.⁵³ CHSRA’s 2025 project update estimated that the EOS would recover a mere 45 percent of its expenses, and suggested even abandoning the spur to Merced and replacing it with two different “scenarios.”⁵⁴ Federal funds

Forbes

California’s High-Speed Rail Project Is A Disgraceful Boondoggle

⁴⁷ Termination of Cooperative Agreements Letter, *supra* note 42, at 3, 17–19.

⁴⁸ CHSRA, 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL PROJECT UPDATE REPORT, *supra* note 14, at 90–91. CHSRA’s “Ancillary revenue opportunities” include advertising (billboards, trains, stations); baggage fees; excess land sales; parking fees; retail at the station level; sponsorship (station naming, system naming); fiber optics; telecommunication towers; ground leases; electric vehicle charging; food and beverage; and express cargo.

⁴⁹ Notice of Proposed Determination and Compliance Review Report, *supra* note 45, at 20.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at 22–23.

⁵¹ Compl., *Cal. High-Speed Rail Auth. v. U.S. Dep’t of Transp.*, No. 2:25-at-00931 (July 17, 2025, E.D. Cal.), ECF No. 1.

⁵² Ashley Carnahan, *California Abandons Legal Battle to Restore \$4B in Federal Funding for Long-Delayed High-Speed Rail Project*, FOX BUSINESS (Dec. 28, 2025), <https://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/california-abandons-legal-battle-restore-4b-federal-funding-long-delayed-high-speed-rail-project>.

⁵³ CHSRA, 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL PROJECT UPDATE REPORT, *supra* note 14, at 2.

⁵⁴ *Id.* at 2–3, 37. The proposed “scenarios” include a \$54.4 billion Gilroy–Bakersfield line and a \$87.1 billion Gilroy–Palmdale line. *Id.* at 4, 6, 13.

should not be wasted on projects that even its proponents admit will not be profitable when completed.

Conclusion

From the beginning, Republicans and Democrats have wanted high-speed rail to succeed in California. The American people want more, faster, and safer transportation options. But the only consistency for high-speed rail in California over the past quarter of a century has been CHSRA's mismanagement.

Democrats in California including Governor Newsom, the Obama-Biden administration, and the Biden-Harris administration refused to hold CHSRA accountable and instead continued to shovel taxpayer dollars to it without sufficient oversight. Just like the procurement process of the NextGen Acela, in which Obama's FRA and Amtrak tried to partner with CHSRA with no success, Democrats were blinded by the futuristic ambition of high-speed rail, without accounting for practical realities.

California high-speed rail faces an uncertain future. There is little hope Governor Newsom will hold the CHSRA accountable for its delays—he has taken no action to do so over the past seven years—but at least the Trump administration has kept the federal government's resources, including important taxpayer-funded grants, from being wasted on the project.

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