

# CHURCH of the CANYONS



TO LOVINGLY PROCLAIM JESUS TO  
EVERYONE AND

## HSR Position Statement

The California High Speed Rail project is a rail system envisioned to connect Los Angeles with San Francisco by 2035. The current proposed route of the high-speed rail will pass through the Sand Canyon area of Santa Clarita and specifically directly through the campus of Church of the Canyons.

The position of the leadership of Church of the Canyons is that this project is a detriment to our ministry at COC and the quality of life for everyone in the Sand Canyon area of Santa Clarita.

Regional rail executives at Metro state they are, "Trying to design the route so it doesn't create a huge community debacle."<sup>1</sup> However in the Sand Canyon area, we believe that is exactly what this project will accomplish. Two dozen homes are in the project path. Two elementary schools and a variety of homes and properties will be impacted significantly by the projected "20 trains per hour"<sup>2</sup> traveling in each direction. Property values will likely decline for those home owners not directly impacted by the project. And Church of the Canyons, a church that has ministered to the people of Santa Clarita in the Sand Canyon area for over 33 years, will have to relocate.

Some may argue that the greater good of California is worth the forced sacrifice of the small number of homes, churches, schools and businesses along the project route. We understand the importance of sacrifice. Christ taught through His life and sacrificial death that the needs of the many required the sacrifice of the One. But in this case, we do not believe the high-speed rail project as envisioned creates a greater good for the people of California sufficient to call for the sacrifice required.

We are also opposed to this project as we believe it is an irresponsible use of taxpayer money.

California voters approved Proposition 1A in 2008 to partially fund the establishment of "high-speed train service linking Southern California, Sacramento/San Joaquin, and the San Francisco Bay Area"<sup>3</sup>. In 2008, when voters approved the measure, the estimate for the total cost of the project was \$40 billion. In 2011, the California High-Speed Rail Authority issued a new cost estimate for the entire project, saying that it will cost between \$98.5 billion and \$118 billion.<sup>4</sup> Sealed bids for the first leg of the high-speed rail line have been submitted<sup>5</sup> with construction expected to begin just north of Fresno later this year. It remains to be seen how close the actual expenses will be to the estimates.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.railway-technology.com/projects/california/>

<sup>3</sup> [ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/California\\_Proposition\\_1A,\\_High-Speed\\_Rail\\_Act\\_\(2008\)](http://ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/California_Proposition_1A,_High-Speed_Rail_Act_(2008))

<sup>4</sup> [Palo Alto Online, "Price tag swells for California high-speed rail project", November 1, 2011](http://www.paloaltoonline.com/2011/11/01/price-tag-swells-for-california-high-speed-rail-project/)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.mercurynews.com/california-high-speed-rail/ci\\_22380751/california-high-speed-rail-cost-figures-coming-but](http://www.mercurynews.com/california-high-speed-rail/ci_22380751/california-high-speed-rail-cost-figures-coming-but)

In addition to these massive cost increases, the plan which originally promised to transport passengers from Los Angeles to San Francisco in two hours and forty minutes with no transfers now is envisioned to include several transfers and take several hours.<sup>6</sup>

The rails were originally to be electrified for energy and speed efficiency. But the rails on the first segment will not be electrified until 2022 and only if more money is allocated. The plan as it is now envisioned is a patchwork of new and existing tracks which will sharply curtail speed and efficiency.<sup>7</sup>

The Bible asks this question. "Which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?" (*Luke 14:28*) It is our conviction that the high-speed rail is and will continue to be an irresponsible use of tax dollars.

At Church of the Canyons we trust in God's ability to meet all our needs and we have no doubt that God's plan for our church is perfect, even if it means moving. At the same time we believe it is important to speak up as responsible citizens in our community making our position on this issue clear.

Sincerely,

*Pastor Bob Childress*

For the Elder Board

Church of the Canyons

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.myfoxla.com/story/19768269/high-speed-rail-revisited>

<sup>7</sup> <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/nov/27/local/la-me-bullet-politics-20121127>