



January 6, 2025

The Honorable Dave Cortese
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
State Capitol, Room 405
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 667 (Archuleta) – Railroads, wayside detectors - *Oppose* - Senate Transportation Committee on 1/13/2026

Senator Cortese,

The undersigned organizations write to respectfully oppose SB 667. SB 667 would make it more difficult to move goods around the state and create a patchwork of rules across a national rail system, resulting in supply chain delays and increased costs.

California is home to America's largest economy. A key part of this is the state's multimodal transportation network, which serves goods and people that add to domestic prosperity. California's goods movement is incredibly complex, what some have coined, the "system of systems." When one part of that system is disrupted the entire supply chain feels the reverberations. Between the two Class 1 rail companies and 25 short lines around the state, over 165 million tons of goods are moved annually, touching every sector of the economy. California agriculture alone originates around 53,000 carloads of food products with more than 200,000 carloads of farm products and inputs imported into California annually.

While California needs to ensure rail operations are safe, data from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) shows rail safety has dramatically improved. Congress has also tasked the FRA to gather additional information to ensure the industry and its regulators are able to have definitive answers to the question of wayside detectors and their effect on safety, the economy, and the environment.

Wayside detectors have been a helpful tool as the movement of goods by rail has become safer over the last couple decades. Freight rail companies have deployed detectors based on data collected showing that in some areas wayside detectors may be needed at closer intervals than the bill requires while showing that in other areas they are not needed as close. By requiring a one-size-fits all approach, SB 667 threatens to bring goods movement in California to halt.

California should follow the Surface Transportation Boards' (STB) recommendation during the Biden Administration and wait for the STB to complete their study on recommendations for wayside detectors. As is, SB 667 arbitrarily places requirements on railroads and hinders goods movement by rail, without any scientific evidence.

SB 667 imposes an arbitrary one-size-fits-all and does not allow railroads flexibility to take into account multiple driving factors. The California rail network is a critical link in the global supply chain. Consistency across jurisdictions is pivotal to ensure our nation's supply chain, much of which starts in our state, will continue to work for industries. Given these factors we respectfully must OPPOSE SB 667.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Esquivel, Vice President of Government Relations
California Manufacturers & Technology Association



Rachel Michelin, President & CEO
California Retailers Association



Mike Jacob, President
Pacific Merchant Shipping Association



Renee Pinel, President/CEO
Western Plant Health Association



Roger Isom, President/CEO
California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association
Western Tree Nut Association



Daniel Hartwig, President
California Fresh Fruit Association



Shirley Rowe, President
African American Farmers of California



Manuel Cunha, Jr., President
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Matt Dias, President and CEO
California Forestry Association



Skyler Wonnacott, Senior Director of Government Relations
California Business Properties Association
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Jonathan Kendrick, Policy Advocate
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