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Barbara J. Thomas  
*Executive Director*

February 18, 2021

Senator Lena Gonzalez  
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senator Bates – SB 214

Dear Senator Gonzalez,

On behalf of the South Orange County Economic Coalition (SOCEC) Board of Directors, I write you today in support of SB 214 by Senator Bates. This bill would remove the January 1, 2022, sunset date and authorize the County of Orange to develop a neighborhood electric vehicle (NEV) transportation plan for the developing community of Rancho Mission Viejo in south Orange County. NEVs are electric-powered vehicles, similar to golf carts, designed for low-speed neighborhood use that can travel up to 25 mph. These vehicles provide an alternative to automobile travel within the community to reduce auto emissions and provide a convenience for residents.

This master planned community will be a total of 23,000 acres including 17,000 acres of permanent open space, 14,000 homes and up to 5 million square feet of commercial development.

SOCEC has been a supporter of the Rancho Mission Viejo Ranch Plan and its existing NEV transportation plan. The Ranch actually benefits from one of the state's largest NEV transportation networks utilizing a multi-modal trail system and appropriate public streets. The NEV Plan was first authorized in 2007 and reauthorized in 2015. There are two reports on file prepared by the County and submitted to the Legislature that demonstrate the success of this NEV program. SB 214 proposes to make the NEV program permanent by eliminating further sunset dates.

As south Orange County's leading voice of business, the South Orange County Economic Coalition is the driving force of advocating for a strong local economy. We focus on four key areas: Advocacy, Education, Representation and Progress for South Orange County issues, initiatives and projects. We support and encourage a streamlined government process. Representing hundreds of employees, we are an alliance of businesses, community thought-leaders and stakeholders committed to enhancing the region's economic vitality and protecting its exceptional quality of life.

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949.600.5470 • [www.EconomicCoalition.com](http://www.EconomicCoalition.com)



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SOCEC stands in support of SB 214 and we respectfully urge your support it so we can continue to promote the sustainable use of NEVs on the Ranch for the benefit of the residents and region at large. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Thomas  
Executive Director

Cc: Orange County Board of Supervisors  
Frank Kim, CEO, County of Orange  
James Treadaway, Director, OC Public Works