

Congressman Kevin McCarthy [sent a letter](#) requesting the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study into the California high-speed rail project's viability and questionable ridership and costs projections. Eleven members of Congress joined Congressman McCarthy in sending the letter, including House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Darrell Issa and Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines & Hazardous Materials Chairman Bill Shuster.

The request is in addition to [legislation](#) (H.R. 3143) Congressman McCarthy introduced on October 7th that would compel the same study be conducted. H.R. 3143 would freeze all unspent federal dollars for California's high-speed rail project so that taxpayers can get the answers they deserve and was [highlighted](#) by Congressman McCarthy at a House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing last week. That hearing reiterated the need for an audit of this project.

Full text of the letter below:

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro Comptroller General of the United States United States  
Government Accountability Office

441 G Street, NW

Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro,

We write to request the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conduct a study into the California High Speed Rail Project's viability and questionable ridership and costs projections.

Good stewardship of taxpayer dollars is a priority for us, and allowing the money of hard-working Americans to be wasted on a questionable project with many unanswered

questions would be an abdication of our responsibilities as elected officials of the American people. The California High Speed Rail Project of today is vastly different from the one California voters narrowly approved in 2008. Since that vote, the cost of building the system has more than doubled, the timeline has been pushed back over a decade, and no private investment has occurred. Needless to say, the California High Speed Rail Authority's recently released business plan for the project only raises more questions and concerns.

On December 15, 2011, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee conducted a hearing on the California High Speed Rail Project. At this hearing, concerns were expressed over the management of the project and its exploding costs, construction delays, and viability, including if taxpayers would ultimately end up heavily subsidizing ticket prices to encourage ridership. To help answer questions about the project, Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy has introduced legislation (H.R. 3143) to require GAO to conduct a study of the California High Speed Rail Project. H.R. 3143 is working through the legislative process, but we specifically request the GAO conduct a study on the California High Speed Rail Project that includes the following:

- An assessment of the accuracy of the ridership projections by the California High Speed Rail Authority;
- An assessment of the amount of Federal or State funding that will be needed to complete the construction of the California High Speed Rail project;
- An assessment of the amount of Federal or State funding that will be needed annually for operation, maintenance, and debt amortization of the project;
- A comparison of the various total project costs for the California High Speed Rail Project and relative ticket prices for the project to be self sustaining without any government subsidies;
- A comparison of the cost of the California High Speed Rail Project to other modes of transportation, such as by locomotive, airplane, and car, available to travelers in California;

- An assessment of any adverse economic impacts resulting from the eminent domain of private property for the project; and,
- A comparison of the California High Speed Rail Project costs and viability to other high speed rail projects in the U.S.

Thank you for your attention on this important matter. Please contact Rob McCarthy with Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

**Kevin McCarthy**, House Majority Whip **John Mica**, Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee **Darrell Issa**,  
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

**Bill Shuster**  
, Chairman, Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials

**Brian Bilbray**  
, Member of Congress

**John Campbell**  
, Member of Congress

**Jeff Denham**  
, Member of Congress

**Duncan Hunter**  
, Member of Congress

**Tom McClintock**  
, Member of Congress

**Devin Nunes**  
, Member of Congress

**Gary Miller**  
, Member of Congress

**Howard P. "Buck" McKeon**

, Member of Congress