



# Non-Billions for Non-Trains

July 22, 2025

The federal government has officially stopped throwing money at California's long-in-the-non-making "high-speed" railroad. A scheduled-but-unspent \$4 billion in federal subsidy has been [canceled](#).

If the nonexistent project continues, money to fund non-laying down of non-tracks must come from other sources.

Non-tracks? Yes. As Victoria Taft *notes*, "Not one foot of track" of the not-in-progress "high-speed" railroad of the future has been glued into place.

*We were just getting to track-laying phase, California*

Governor Newsom protests.

The going rate for snail-pace non-completion of nonexistent, not-in-progress railroads is \$15 billion ([says](#) the Department of Transportation): the estimated amount of federal funding for California's non-project to date.

The total graft bin may have been even larger than that; who knows how many nickels for the non-project have been collected from widows and orphans? But something like \$15 billion is how much the federal government doled out over 16 years to ensure the railroad's non-construction. Projected total cost of California's infinite-prep-phase railroad: \$135 billion.

Why has it taken so long—six-ish whole months—for the second Trump administration to get around to stoppering this particular gusher of monstrous waste of taxpayer dollars?

Perhaps proceeding as fast as they can, the cost-cutters and fraud-flayers take their mission one thing at a time. In Trump's place, you might be tempted to chuck the whole five-mile-thick list of federal expenditures, throw it into the pyre and defund everything, re-starting from scratch with the courts and military. But not all temptations play out in Washington.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.