

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

July 2, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: Aberdeen US 12 Highway-Rail Separation Project**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing in support of the City of Aberdeen's application to the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Aberdeen US-12 Highway-Rail Separation Project.

US-12 is the principal transportation route through Aberdeen, Washington to the coastal communities on the Pacific Ocean and Olympic Peninsula. It provides vehicle and freight access to and from the Port of Grays Harbor and the Westport Marina, which ranks 13<sup>th</sup> in the nation with more than 120 million pounds of commercial seafood landed annually, and is a designated Critical Rural Freight Corridor. According to the Port, it handled nearly 3 million metric tons of cargo in 2020.

Currently, US-12 experiences frequent congestion, which affects local residents, visitors to Grays Harbor, and commercial and freight operations of the Port of Grays Harbor and surrounding industries. This is largely due to trains that block access to Gateway Plaza, a high-traffic destination generating \$161 million in sales each year. When trains pass by the commercial area, all seven at-grade vehicular entrances are blocked. This also creates a public safety hazard as emergency vehicle access is blocked.

The Aberdeen US-12 Highway-Rail Separation Project will provide rail-separated access between US-12 and the Gateway Plaza, improving highway traffic flow during peak times with the removal of a signalized intersection and the addition of a roundabout. The addition of sidewalks and bike lanes will improve multi-modal access to the commercial area. The Aberdeen US-12 Highway Separation Project is crucial for improving vehicle mobility, freight capacity, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and emergency access on US-12. This project will improve access to local communities and businesses and encourage economic growth in this rural region.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of the City of Aberdeen's grant application.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator