

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

July 2, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of the Port of Longview's application the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program. The Port is seeking \$16,000,000 to fund construction of its Industrial Rail Corridor Expansion project (IRCE) to improve the Port's last mile rail connection.

Located along the Columbia River, the Port of Longview is a critical link in the nation's supply chain. The Port's connection to the interstate system and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroads grants customers greater access to inland rail networks across the United States and allows a variety of commodities to move efficiently throughout the region. Millions of tons of agriculture and mineral bulk cargos travel through the corridor in addition to other cargo. Despite increasing demand for growth in U.S. exports at deep-draft ports in the Pacific Northwest, limited rail access and capacity constraints severely limits opportunities at the Port's marine terminals.

The Industrial Rail Corridor Expansion project will construct six new track beds and two new tracks alongside the current two-track rail corridor that was built in 2005 to provide the Port's marine terminals with direct access to Class I mainline rail. The immediate addition of two tracks will dramatically reduce the congestion challenges that the Port experiences today and enable efficient unit train operations to several of the Port's berths. This will also enable to Port to quickly scale up to meet future growth and prevent congestion challenges. The Port, the surrounding community and the region have greatly benefited from the success of the original connection and this project will allow the Port to expand the corridor to address congestion challenges and capacity constraints.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration to the Port of Longview's application.

Sincerely,

Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator

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