THE NORTHWEST
SEAPORT ALLIANCE
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April 12, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: City of Fife - Port of Tacoma Interchange Improvement Project FASTLANE Grant Application

Dear Secretary Foxx:

On behalf of The Northwest Seaport Alliance, I am writing in strong support of the City of Fife's Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grant application for the Port of Tacoma Interchange Improvement Project. The Northwest Seaport Alliance, established by the ports of Seattle and Tacoma in August of 2015, operates the nation's fourth largest gateway for international containers, including properties in the Port of Tacoma Tideflats.

This project will provide road, intersection and interchange improvements that greatly enhance access to the Alliance's facilities in the Port of Tacoma Tideflats. It directly connects four major international container terminals, as well as breakbulk and transload facilities with Interstate 5. In 2013, Tideflats cargo facilities (then operated by the Port of Tacoma) generated almost 25,000 jobs, $2.5 billion in business revenue, $2.1 billion in personal income and local consumption and $200 million in state and local taxes. In the future, the project will provide truck access to a new container terminal capable of handling 1.8 million TEUs per year, serving the largest container ships in the world.

The interchange serves as a primary truck route between Interstate 5 and the Alliance's Tacoma Tideflats facilities. Its role in the national freight system is recognized by the fact that it is designated as a National Highway System Intermodal Connector and a component of US Department of Transportation's Highway Multimodal Freight Network.

Design, value engineering and traffic modeling studies have confirmed the need for the improvements, and identified an alternative configuration for the interchange and the I-5/Port of Tacoma Road ramps. The interchange reconstruction will improve the level of service for trucks traveling to and from the Alliance's South Harbor facilities, and the decreased truck-idle times would reduce air emissions in a region of Washington State that only recently attained compliance with federal air quality standards. Because these improvements are so vital, the Alliance's Port of Tacoma is contributing $1.5 million towards the project.

Given the Port of Tacoma Interchange Improvement Project's importance on a regional and national scale, I fully support the City of Fife's efforts to secure a FASTLANE grant for the project.

Sincerely,

John Wolfe, CEO
The Northwest Seaport Alliance