

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



815 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 637-5000
www.aflcio.org

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July 16, 2015

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon, Room 3E446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to you about our support of the Gateway Pacific Terminal, which is a matter of great importance to the labor movement, those working to create family-wage jobs and a vibrant maritime industry, and Washington's economy.

The AFL-CIO passed a resolution at our 2013 convention supporting the Gateway Pacific project; please find a copy enclosed with this letter. The resolution notes the strong support of both Washington State labor and national labor unions. That support continues to be our united position.

Recently, the Lummi Nation asked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to halt its environmental review of the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal bulk export terminal in Whatcom County in Washington State. Granting such a request would be unprecedented, and the AFL-CIO is deeply concerned about the implications of any decision to halt or delay the Corps' environmental review.

A recent study found that of 7,000 employers in Whatcom County, the 11 in the Cherry Point heavy industrial zone, generate 15% of the County's wage base. This area has been deliberately set aside for water-dependent heavy industry through decades of thoughtful land use and shoreline planning. It is integral to the region's economy and we believe that granting this unprecedented request to halt the Corps' legally mandated review would threaten the long-term viability of this vital economic zone.

Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
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The economic benefits of the Gateway Pacific Terminal are substantial. Promoters estimate that the project will create over 4,000 construction jobs lasting two years, and over 1,000 permanent operating jobs generating more than \$100 million a year in payroll. As you know, these high-wage jobs are desperately needed in Whatcom County.

We understand and appreciate concerns for the protection of environmental and cultural heritage of the region, and there is a process in place to examine such matters. We believe strongly that the Corps should adhere to that process and make its decision based on a full, objective, and complete record.

All along, project backers have promised to work with the Corps as any potential impacts are identified. Nothing has changed, and the Gateway Pacific Terminal stands ready to make this project work for everyone. We understand the Corps is now considering this request, and respectfully ask that you convey to the Army Corps that this environmental review should be allowed to run its course.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth H. Shuler
Secretary-Treasurer

EHS/er

Cc: Thomas Bostick, Lieutenant General, US Army Chief of Engineers
Brigadier General John Kem, Commander, Northwest Division, US Army Corps of Engineers
Colonel John G. Buck, Commander and District Engineer, Seattle District, US Army Corps of Engineers
Charles (Chip) Smith, Assistant for Environment, Tribal and Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)