

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2600

April 6, 2015

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington
Post Office Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

I write to ask for your attention to a matter of significant importance to both our states. As you are surely aware, Montana and the people of the Crow Nation are eagerly awaiting the approval of the Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT) at Cherry Point, based in Whatcom County, Washington. Although project organizers submitted their application more than two years ago, a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has yet to be released. Therefore, I wanted to highlight the numerous economic benefits this project will have, as well as discuss the implications of stalling its progress.

With the potential to tap Pacific Rim markets worth over \$1.5 trillion dollars, the GPT will create good-paying, blue collar jobs for Montana and Washington and provide much needed tax revenue to all levels of state and local government. In turn, critical education and infrastructure projects will gain necessary funding. In Washington State alone, more than 4,400 jobs will be created if the project is approved. With the January 2015 unemployment rate hovering above 7 percent in Bellingham, those are welcome jobs. For Montana, building the GPT also means more employment opportunities, particularly for the Crow Nation, whose unemployment rate often tops 50 percent.

The Crow Nation has been mining coal on its reservation lands for over 40 years. Montana has more than 30 percent of the nation's recoverable coal reserves—enough to power America for 250 years—and the tribe currently sits on an estimated 9 billion tons of coal. However, due to transportation challenges, they have not been able to move coal to the market and actualize on their energy potential. Fully tapping into one of the largest coal reserves in the nation would provide vital opportunities for economic growth for the Crow people and the people of Washington State.

Our states have a long history of working together, and this project will be a prosperous opportunity for Washington and Montana to lead America into an energy independent future. As the EIS process continues, I respectfully ask that you assist with the completion of the draft and permitting process for the terminal. I also request you support the Crow's involvement in discussions about the fate of the GPT with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Washington-based tribes. I cannot stress enough how access to this terminal will revitalize the Crow Nation

and empower thousands of its members who remain unemployed. I urge you, Governor: Please do not let the GPT infrastructure project become the next Keystone XL pipeline.

Thank you for your assistance and consideration. I look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Zinke', is written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Ryan Zinke
Member of Congress