



June 19, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the Washington Farm Bureau (WFB), I am writing in strong support of the City of Fife's 2020 Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant application.

WFB is a voluntary, grassroots advocacy organization representing the social and economic interests of farm and ranch families at the local, state and national level. WFB has 47,000 members and represents farmers who grow some 300 different crops. Apples, milk, potatoes, cattle, wheat, cherries are just some of our major crops that require a robust transportation system to provide a safe, reliable and timely movement of Washington-grown crops to our vital export markets. Agriculture is the state's second largest export category totaling some \$15 billion in annual export value.

That is why we support the city of Fife's 2020 BUILD grant application for Phase II of the **I-5/Port of Tacoma Road Interchange Improvement Project** (Project). Completing the final phase of this important project to address significant backups at this interchange and to dramatically improve the movement of freight and goods as well as traffic in general is critical to Washington's farmers and ranchers.

The project includes road, intersection and intersection improvements at the I-5/Port of Tacoma Road interchange that will greatly enhance a critical connection to the Port of Tacoma, which combines with the Port of Seattle to form the fourth largest gateway for containerized cargo in our nation. These interchange enhancements also include innovative traffic engineering solutions that will improve the movement of goods and people throughout the city of Fife, as well as the entire Central Puget Sound region. This ensures that businesses and industry are unhindered by gridlock and residents have enhanced access to jobs, education opportunities, and other quality of life amenities.

Please feel free to reach out to me at tdavis@wsfb.com or 360-528-2910 if you have any questions regarding our support of this necessary project for 2020 BUILD funds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Davis'.

Tom Davis
Director of Government Relations