

July 2, 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 Wine Institute, representing 98% of all Washington State wine produced and distributed throughout our state, nation, and the world, I am writing in strong support of the City of Fife's 2020 Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant application for Phase II of the **I-5/Port of Tacoma Road Interchange Improvement Project** (Project). This Project completes the final phase of a transformational effort by the City of Fife, the Port of Tacoma, and The Washington State Department of Transportation to address significant backups at this interchange and to dramatically improve the movement of freight and goods as well as traffic in general.

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.

Additionally, these interchange enhancements 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.

Over the years, the City of Fife has successfully partnered with the business community on various infrastructure enhancement projects, including Phase I of the I-5/Port of Tacoma Road Interchange Project. **These partnerships are key to why the Washington wine industry has successfully shipped overseas a significant amount of wine each year through the Port.** To remain healthy as an industry, our largest wineries as well as those that have found success in foreign markets MUST have a stable and expedited way to move wine from our state to foreign countries, which makes the need for completion vital to our industry's current and future success.

We are committed to continuing our support for the City of Fife to bring this project to fruition, benefiting the communities and stakeholders adjacent to this interchange, as well as the economic growth of the entire region. Please feel free to reach out to me at josh@wwi.wine if you have any questions regarding our support of this necessary project for 2020 BUILD funds.

Sincerely,



Josh McDonald
Executive Director
Washington Wine Institute