



July 1, 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 Winegrowers Association, we 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 effort finishes off the final phase of work by the City of Fife, the Port of Tacoma, and the Washington State Department of Transportation to address a long-standing bottleneck causing significant backups at a critical crossroad. The project improves the movement of freight and goods (not to mention traffic) in the area.

It should be noted that these improvements enhance a critical connection to the Port of Tacoma, which combined with the Port of Seattle, forms the fourth largest gateway in the country for containerized cargo.

Winegrowers is member-based public policy trade association focused on supporting programs, projects and policies that benefit winegrape growers and vintners. Our job is to vocally support projects like this that will help protect and keep the Washington wine industry sustainable. We are recognized globally for quality wines but we have to effectively and efficiently get our world-class wines to markets around the world.

We understand that these interchange enhancements have innovative traffic solutions to improve the movement of goods and people through the City of Fife and the entire Central Puget Sound region. We fully support this effort as it allows businesses and industries like ours access to jobs, education, amenities—all because they aren't stuck in traffic.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions regarding our support of this project for 2020 BUILD funds. This is a fix that has been desperately needed for a long, long time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Vicky Scharlau'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a decorative flourish at the end.

Vicky Scharlau
Executive Director

