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April 26th, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am pleased today to write in strong support of The Northwest Seaport Alliance's (NWSA) application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration's (MARAD) 2024 Port Infrastructure Development Program for funding to support the *Pierce County Terminal Efficiency Project*. This funding, if awarded, will support efforts to improve the Pierce County Terminal in NWSA's South Harbor, located in Tacoma, Washington.

The project seeks to make the cargo terminal more energy efficient, expand capacity for refrigerated containers, and modernize the transfer zone to allow the terminal to operate more cost-effectively through a number of planned improvements. These improvements include:

- The upgrade of terminal lighting to LED;
- The addition of 198 outlets for refrigerated containers, enabling this essential equipment to run on clean electricity instead of diesel generators, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the terminal;
- The rebuilding of the deteriorating "transfer zone" where containers are transferred from large straddle carriers to drayage trucks. The current transfer zone's paving is deteriorating and poses a safety hazard to both workers and drivers at the terminal; and
- The construction of reefer racks, which will enable the terminal to handle refrigerated exports more efficiently.

These improvements will support the local economy by increasing the competitiveness of exports and reducing costs for farmers, ranchers, and other producers seeking to get their goods to international markets. In particular, this project will specifically benefit Northwest agricultural exporters, who have weathered several difficult years of supply chain upheaval in the region. Additionally, these improvements will enable the NWSA to advance its Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy goal of eliminating seaport-related emissions by 2050.

This project will support marine cargo operations that provide more than 58,400 jobs and more than $4 billion in labor income across the Washington state economy, ensuring its resiliency and efficiency for years to come. It is for these reasons that I strongly support the NWSA's application for funding through MARAD's 2024 Port Infrastructure Development Program, and I urge your fair and full consideration of their proposal. Should you have any questions, please contact Emma Abraham in my Tacoma district office at Emma.Abraham@mail.house.gov or 253-272-3515.

Sincerely,



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress