

# International Union of Operating Engineers Local 701

To Whom It May Concern:

I thank you for providing the opportunity for citizens to comment on the impact of the proposed Millennium Bulk Terminal project in Longview, Washington and your commitment that these comments will be earnestly considered as the permitting process continues. This project is critical to not only create jobs across Pacific Northwest, as well as grow the economy throughout the state, but will also develop and upgrade trade infrastructure within the state. As you know, Washington is one of the most trade dependent states in the nation, and I fear if this project is not approved, the residents of Washington State and labor workers will suffer the consequences.

Operating Engineers Local 701 represents over 3,500 heavy equipment operators, heavy duty repairers, technical engineers and stationary engineers. Since 1918, Local 701 has formed and shaped the roads, infrastructure and skylines of our region. Both members of my union, their families and communities, are dependent on these types of projects to garner skill sets, boost the economy, and provide them with livable wages. This project will generate millions of dollars in economic output in Washington and the Pacific Northwest, creating 2,650 direct and indirect jobs in the region during its construction phase and over 300 long-term jobs in the community. These jobs will generate \$302 million in wages during construction and bring in \$65 million annually after the terminal is built, which will further grow our local economy.

Despite the clear benefits of the project and completion of a robust impact review, regulators have continually delayed this project. Coupled with the fact the permits for the project have been pending in the Department of Ecology for over 5 years, it is portrayed as if government officials in the state of Washington would rather put their political agendas above the needs of the citizens of the state. The approval of this project is not something that can be taken lightly – these are necessary jobs and wages to ensure the state's economy is sustainable. In addition, not only is the lack of decision a detriment to the workers of Washington, but also sets the precedent to future investors that Washington is not the state to conduct infrastructure business in.

It is very disheartening, as a labor worker, to see the best interests of workers all over the state be put aside. This is not the time to be holding labor jobs hostage in order to further political ideals. Instead, regulators in Washington should acknowledge how beneficial the project is for everyone involved. It will create thousands of new jobs, grow the economy, and expand trade abilities for the entire state of Washington. In addition, the tax revenue raised from this project will help to upgrade future projects, such as infrastructure development (like road and sidewalk repairs), education, and social programs.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to leave a comment in regards to this matter, but I hope this statement is truly considered. We cannot wait any longer for a decision on this matter and I would encourage regulators to weigh the obvious benefits vs. the minimal impacts to which mitigation options have already been outlined. Labor workers across the state are dependent on projects like these and the lengthy review time is setting a very dangerous standard for the future of infrastructure projects and business proposals in the state of Washington.

Sincerely,

Nate Stokes  
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International Union of Operating Engineers Local 701