

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4704

October 30, 2017

The Honorable K. Jane Williams
Acting Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Acting Administrator Williams:

I am writing in support of an application submitted by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for the Federal Transit Administration's *Passenger Ferry Grant Program* for the Terminal and Vessel Communication Infrastructure Modernization project.

WSDOT Ferries Division is seeking a Passenger Ferry Grant to make much needed improvements to communication infrastructure on vessels, at ferry terminals, and across the entire ferry system. This project would update communication infrastructure on 21 vessels and install high-speed Ethernet connections at six terminals including Clinton, Edmonds, Keystone, Mukilteo, Tahlequah, and Vashon. In addition, it would replace outdated networks and servers across the ferry system.

The communication infrastructure on these vessels is aging, with most of the equipment no longer supported or manufactured and wiring that is overdue for replacement. Improved cellular communication on vessels would ensure a reliable connection to the Ferries Operation Center. New high-speed Ethernet connections would support full use of security systems, prevent network outages which impact fare collections, and better integrate regional fare collection systems like *Good To Go!* and the next generation ORCA program. Currently, 46 percent of the ferry system's networks are six years or older, and 50 percent of the servers are five years or older. Updating this communication infrastructure would provide WSDOT Ferries Division with the ability to run new systems and more efficiently process riders in the future, better positioning the ferry system for ridership growth.

As the largest ferry system in the nation, WSDOT Ferries Division carries more than 24.2 million passengers and vehicles on 10 routes to 20 terminals each year. This project would ensure WSDOT Ferries Division continues to provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation to eight counties in Washington state and British Columbia in Canada.

Thank you for your consideration of the Washington State Department of Transportation's application. Please contact Samara Ressler in my Washington, D.C. office at 202-224-2621 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patty Murray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Patty Murray
United States Senator