

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

November 1, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

As members of the Puget Sound Congressional delegation, we write to ask for your support of Sound Transit's applications for a Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) and a TIFIA loan for the Federal Way Link Extension project.

Puget Sound voters approved ballot measures in 1996, 2008 and most recently in 2016 to build a regional high-capacity transit system. As that system comes on line, our constituents are consistently choosing Sound Transit's alternatives to escape gridlock and traffic, and the Puget Sound region continues to boast the nation's fastest-growing transit ridership. In the last five years, traffic congestion in the I-5 corridor has increased by 128 percent, while transit ridership has grown by 196 percent. Currently 47 percent of commuter trips to downtown Seattle are on transit. As Sound Transit continues to establish effective high-capacity transit options, the Federal Way Link Extension project is a crucial next step in decreasing commute times and reducing traffic congestion throughout the Puget Sound region.

Sound Transit's strong partnership with the Department of Transportation is central to the expansion of our system. We very much appreciate the Department's work in approving an FFGA last year for the Lynnwood Link Extension Project with a 38 percent Federal share, which will allow Sound Transit to extend light rail to the citizens of Snohomish County. The next step in implementing this much-needed regional system will be the Federal Way Link Extension, a 7.8-mile light rail expansion from Angle Lake, just south of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, to Federal Way. A low federal share of 25% in Sound Transit's FFGA application for this \$3.161 billion project illustrates the strong commitment our region has made to invest in and fund these projects. Financing for the Federal Way Link Extension also contains the last of four loans authorized by the Build America Bureau's 2016 Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Master Credit Agreement with Sound Transit which expires on December 22nd. Sound Transit has secured a contractor with a cost-competitive bid and is ready to proceed with construction once the FFGA and TIFIA loan are executed.

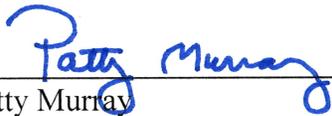
The Federal Way Link Extension will also be a catalyst for an estimated \$34 million in transit-oriented development and an estimated \$1.8 million in annual parking revenue. Recent, current and projected private-sector development near light rail stations in the City of SeaTac, at the northern end of the project, total \$465 million. Another \$680 million of overall public- and private-sector value capture has been identified in the Federal Way Link corridor. Sound Transit

expects this extension to add 40,700 daily trips and save the average commuter approximately 30 minutes of travel time compared to driving.

In its previous FFGAs, Sound Transit has been a proven steward of federal funds, completing them under budget and ahead of schedule. The University Link Extension opened six months ahead of schedule and \$200 million under budget, and the Angle Lake Extension opened four years earlier than planned and under budget, thanks in part to a federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant. The third FFGA, signed in December, supports the Lynnwood Link Extension, where construction is well underway.

We look forward to a continued federal partnership with the Department, and we urge you to execute the CIG FFGA and close on the accompanying TIFIA loan for the Federal Way Link Extension this year.

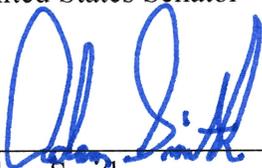
Thank you for your consideration.



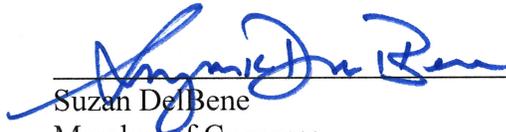
Patty Murray
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



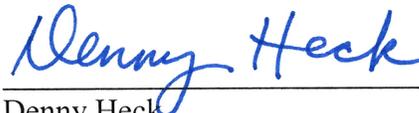
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



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