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Charles P. Costanzo
Vice President – Pacific Region

April 14, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: City of Seattle - South Lander Street
Grade Separation FAST Grant Application

Dear Secretary Foxx:

On behalf of the American Waterways Operators, the national trade association for the tugboat, towboat and barge industry, thank you for the opportunity to voice our support for the award of a \$55M FAST Grant to the City of Seattle for the South Lander Street Grade Separation project.

The American Waterways Operators is the national trade association for the U.S. tugboat, towboat and barge industry, which is a vital segment of America's transportation system. The industry safely and efficiently moves over 800 million tons of cargo each year, including more than 60 percent of U.S. export grain, energy sources, and other bulk commodities that are the building blocks of the U.S. economy. The fleet consists of more than 4,000 tugboats and towboats, and over 27,000 barges of all types. Tugboats also provide essential harbor services in ports around the country. The tugboat, towboat and barge industry provides the nation with a safe, secure, low-cost, environmentally friendly means of transportation for America's domestic commerce.

For nearly 20 years, the South Lander Street project has been prioritized in every local freight access study, including the 1998 and subsequently updated Freight Action Strategy (FAST Corridor), the joint Port of Seattle/City of Seattle Industrial Areas Freight Access Program, the WSDOT State Freight Plan, and the City of Seattle Freight Master Plan. This is a project of statewide and national significance that is long-overdue and represents a tremendous opportunity to enable efficient freight mobility for the City of Seattle, Port of Seattle, the Puget Sound region, and Washington State.

The South Lander Street project would strengthen Seattle's maritime economy by creating an efficient freight corridor in the largest manufacturing and industrial area in the Pacific Northwest. The region must improve local infrastructure to enable better freight access to

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major surface transportation corridors. The South Lander Street project would provide direct connections to Port of Seattle facilities and freight operational support centers, which contribute to 75,000 existing jobs and an additional 25,000 jobs that are forecasted by 2040. The average pay for a job in Washington is \$52,000, while maritime workers are paid an average of \$70,800—totaling over \$4 billion in wages in 2012.

On behalf of our members, I encourage you to approve the application from the City of Seattle for a \$55M FAST Grant. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Charles Costanzo

Cc:

Senator Maria Cantwell
Senator Patty Murray
Governor Jay Inslee
Congressman Jim McDermott