

*Sailors' Union*



*of the Pacific*

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**GUNNAR LUNDEBERG • PRESIDENT / SECRETARY-TREASURER**



April 8th, 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 Sailors' Union of the Pacific, I would like to express our support for the funding of the South Lander Street Grade Separation and Railroad Safety Project in Seattle, and ask for your consideration in reviewing the FASTLANE Grant Application for this project.

These improvements for the Lander corridor have been in discussion for many years, and past proposals were intended in part to mitigate the additional pedestrian and vehicular traffic related to the construction of SafeCo Field in 1996 (City Clerk File 301511). After 20 years, we are still facing an infrastructure deficit in the SoDo industrial district, and the completion of the Lander Street project would alleviate long standing congestion problems associated with SafeCo Field, unbind the supply chain from itself in certain circumstances, and demonstrate to the business community that the Federal Government has confidence in our Port as a long-term going concern worth investing in. We can only hope that the city's current plan to construct a third arena in our industrial district will consider the reality that traffic mitigation related to SafeCo Field and CenturyLink Field was never completed.

The Port of Seattle in the State of Washington is a crucial lifeline for local commerce, regional agriculture, and a regional gateway to the Midwest for imports and exports. "First and last mile" infrastructure is key to a reliable supply chain that not only drives our national economy, but also maintains living wage jobs for people to pay their bills and raise their families. Seattle is one of the fastest growing cities in the nation, and the market-driven commercial development and changes in land use around our Port is contributing to the overcapacity on the surface streets, and must be addressed. Lander Street is in the SoDo industrial district, where the BNSF rail gateway, access points to Interstates 5 and 90, arterial throughways to warehouses and trans-load facilities, and our Port all converge. Lander Street connects together the elements of this precious asset known as the Duwamish Manufacturing Industrial Center, next to a natural deep water harbor, and this project is an investment for generations to come.

Safety is of paramount importance to us, and we pride ourselves in the welfare of our own members, as well as the public, when encountering the environment necessary to move cargo. Several of the east-west connector freight routes in this area intersect with up to 17 tracks, and the means for pedestrians to navigate these dangerous crossings is inadequate and life threatening. Similarly, when the surface streets are congested with vehicles, drivers take dangerous risks in attempting to circumvent wait times, which can be deadly for these drivers as well as dangerous for workers operating the trains. In cases when we are lucky to not see harm to people, accidents still disrupt the supply chain and impact the operations of the Port of Seattle and other places. The completion of this project would solve some of the problems that contribute to these bad outcomes.

Over 75,000 people rely on our Port and manufacturing center in SoDo for their livelihoods, and only through investment in our infrastructure can we see these jobs multiply to provide opportunities for people to earn a good living. The South Lander Street Grade Separation and Railroad Safety Project is such an investment for this purpose.

Sincerely Yours,



Vince O'Halloran

Seattle Branch Agent  
Sailors' Union of the Pacific