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Washington State Legislative Board

Representing Railroad Train & Bus Service Employees of Washington State

11225 Roosevelt Way N.E., Seattle, WA. 98125

Washington State Legislative Board Executive Committee:

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Steve Mazulo – Assistant Legislative Director / Gary Howell – Board Chair & Alternate Legislative Director / Todd Kester – Secretary / Clyde Rosa – Vice Chairman

November 28, 2016

Millennium Bulk Terminals Longview NEPA Draft EIS,
c/o ICF International,
710 Second Ave, Suite # 550,
Seattle, WA. 98104

Dear ICF International:

The Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART-TD) formerly United Transportation Union, is the largest labor organization representing railroad operating craft employees North America. We represent workers on every Class I railroad including AMTRAK, as well as employees on many regional and Short Line railroads. We serve as the voice for over 125,000 active and retired workers, drawn predominantly from the operating crafts in the railroad industry; including conductors, brakemen, switchmen, ground service personnel, locomotive engineers, hostlers, yardmasters and workers in associated crafts.

Members of our organization have watched thousands of our jobs disappear across our nation as shipments of coal have dropped dramatically in recent years. One in every five US railroad jobs are directly linked to the transportation of coal. These jobs, once lost, are unlikely to ever be replaced.

Here in Washington, our members operate trains that have safely carried coal throughout our state for nearly one and a half centuries. We never heard of any significant objections or concerns expressed about the health, safety, or environmental impacts of moving this mineral until the proposals to construct new coal export terminals, that would significantly restore lost railroad jobs, were publicly announced.

We are very pleased to see the Corps of Engineers draft environmental impact statement (NEPA DEIS) for Millennium Bulk Terminals (Millennium) affirm the analysis and findings of the draft environmental impact statement previously completed by Cowlitz County and the Washington State Department of Ecology. Both reports confirmed that all federal and state environmental laws designed to protect the public and wildlife will be met by the Millennium proposal. These findings provide the needed independent expert confirmation that the movement of coal does not pose any challenges for air quality or water quality.

The NEPA DEIS is a detailed and complete review of the environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of Millennium. We commend the Corps for its careful work in completing the same type and scope of analysis that has been demanded of a host of other projects, including developments on the Columbia River.

Railroad jobs inherently depend on the movement of goods from one location to another. The release of this complete NEPA DEIS for Millennium sets the stage for the Corps to complete its work, issue a final environmental impact statement and grant the federal permits necessary for this project. SMART Transportation Division urges you to move quickly to complete these final steps necessary to permit the Millennium project and help restore these critical middle class family wage railroad jobs.

Lastly, we recognize and value the enormous efforts that have been expended in developing and preparing this draft EIS. We want to thank you for your thoroughness and convey our appreciation of your providing due consideration to our comments regarding the development of the Millennium Bulk Terminals Project. Feel free to contact us if you desire more information or to answer any questions.

On behalf of our nearly two thousand members working on railroads in Washington State - we are,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Krohn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Herb Krohn
Washington State Legislative Director
SMART Transportation Division
Formerly United Transportation Union