



KENT CHAMBER
OF + COMMERCE

February 2, 2015

Washington State Senators and Representatives:

The Kent Chamber of Commerce represents 485 businesses in the heart of the State of Washington's economic engine. The Kent valley represents \$49 billion annually to Washington which is 1/8th of the State of Washington's Gross Domestic Product. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the State of Washington for Kent to secure funding for the State of Washington's economic powerhouse protecting our growth trajectory and development for years to come.

The Kent Chamber of Commerce is requesting that lawmakers include \$15 million in the transportation package project list for the completion of S. 228 Street/Union Pacific Railroad Grade Separation. This project is part of the I-5/SR 509 "Gateway" Project; not funding it means daily road closures and undermines the principal of a seamless Port of Seattle to Kent Valley freight corridor. This is the final segment necessary to complete the S. 228th Street corridor where the City and private property owners have already invested over \$50 million. Without this funding, Kent risks losing over \$9 million already secured for the project.

A grade separation at S. 228th/Union Pacific Railroad will eliminate daily traffic delay and improve safety at the UP railroad crossing. It will also allow a direct link between our trade-dependent ports and thousands of businesses located within the 4th largest manufacturing/distribution complex in the nation. The 228th/BNSF crossing is already completed. A grade separation at the UP crossing would eliminate the last major traffic impediment for moving freight from the Kent Valley to the Port of Seattle and Tacoma. This is one of over a dozen corridor locations, where two national rail lines trisect the city and bring 72 trains per day through the community. It is impossible for Kent to fund these regional, stateside and national freight mobility issues without state assistance.

This project is ready to go with your support. The preliminary design, utility relocations, and environmental approvals are complete, as is some advance construction work. With full funding, construction would begin in 2016. Again, the Kent Chamber of Commerce is requesting that lawmakers include \$15 million in the transportation package project list for the completion of S. 228 Street/Union Pacific Railroad Grade Separation to protect this vital economic powerhouse for the State of Washington.

Thank you,

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