



KENT CHAMBER  
OF ♦ COMMERCE

January 26, 2015

Senator Curtis King  
PO Box 40414  
Olympia, WA 98504

Senator Steve Hobbs  
PO Box 40444  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chair King and Ranking Member Hobbs:

The 509 Completion Coalition and the Kent Chamber of Commerce would like to thank you for the work that you have done on behalf of transportation throughout the past year, and ask that you continue to support the timely completion of State Route 509 in the transportation revenue package.

The 509 Completion Coalition consists of every city involved with this project, as well as numerous other governmental entities, businesses, and labor organizations throughout the south Puget Sound. As supporters of the Gateway project during the last session, you are already aware that the SR 509 completion project finishes a corridor that was first designed and envisioned decades ago. The 509 completion project will stimulate new jobs, add 12 lane miles of capacity to Interstate 5, improve air quality, and reduce and remove delays that add costs to our freight-haulers. One area freight distribution business owner estimates that delays during afternoon rush hour *alone* costs his company nearly \$100,000 per year.

Our coalition agrees that investment in transportation infrastructure is the only way that our state can continue to compete in a global economy, and we share your position regarding the use of return on investment as a metric to judge the importance of projects in the revenue package. The Puget Sound Gateway is the most impactful transportation project for the Washington State economy long-term. Studies of the economic impact of State Route 509 completion have indicated that this project would have a return on investment ratio of five-to-one, and would provide \$34 million in state and local revenue in the next 20 years, while adding more than 17,000 new jobs to the Washington State economy.

We are encouraged that every legislative revenue package proposal has included funding for completion of State Route 509, as did the Governor's proposal released in December. However, the Governor's proposal did not put any significant funding into this project until the year 2023, and would extend the timeline for the project by a decade. That's unacceptable. As a primary economic engine for Washington State, we believe that completion of the Puget Sound Gateway – both 509 and 167 -- as soon as possible will substantially improve Washington's economic health as well as its freight movement and its Port-to-distribution-centers traffic flow.

Once again, thank you very much for the work that you have done to strengthen transportation in Washington State. We look forward to working with you to make a completed State Route 509 a reality.

Sincerely,

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