



# Columbia River Steamship Operators' Association, Inc.

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December 13, 2016

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

**Re: Support for the Port of Longview, Washington's Industrial Rail Corridor (IRC) FASTLANE project**

To Whom it May Concern:

The Columbia River Steamship Operators' Association, Inc. (CRSOA), is pleased to provide our support for the Port of Longview, Washington's Industrial Rail Corridor (IRC) FASTLANE project. Established in 1922, the CRSOA consists of members representing ship owners, operators, agents, tow companies and bunkering companies along the Oregon Coast and Columbia/Willamette River Systems. The mission of the CRSOA is to facilitate trade, provide business leadership, exercise principles of environmental stewardship, serve as an industry focal point, and promote operating policies and practices that are safe, reliable, efficient, and cost effective.

The Port of Longview's IRC project consists of relocating the original IRC north to accommodate additional through tracks and sidings with clear lengths of 8,500 feet and greater. This increased rail access will provide optimal staging for current customers and future tenants on redeveloped, underutilized berths. Furthermore, these improvements set the stage for the future Barlow Point Terminals programmed for redevelopment over the next five years.

Located in a rural, economically distressed area of Washington, supporting and expanding the Port of Longview's operations is an integral part of the region's economic strategy. The Port of Longview's IRC project will create additional employment opportunities for residents, enhance the volume of freight traffic through the region, and decrease the amount of potentially dangerous at-grade rail crossings in the community.

The Port of Longview is the first full-service operating port with strategic transportation connections on the deep-draft Columbia River shipping channel in southwest Washington State. Funding for this project will help ensure recent Federal investments including the Columbia River Channel Deepening Project and continual investments in the Columbia River Jetty Rehabilitation Project are maximized. The Columbia River is a federally designated marine highway (M-84) and the Port of Longview is a major port along the river system. Not only would this project benefit our rail and river systems, but would relieve surface transportation congestion as well. Further, the Port of Longview's IRC project is essential in creating economic opportunities, increase cargo-movement efficiency and bringing jobs to a community suffering with 8 % unemployment, 1.7 % more than Washington State's 6.3 %.

We hope you will strongly consider selecting the Port of Longview, Washington's Industrial Rail Corridor project to receive funding through the FASTLANE program.

Respectfully,

Kate Mickelson  
Executive Director