



CITY OF BELLINGHAM
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April 20, 2015

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senator
511 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cantwell:

Maria

Thank you for hosting the meeting to discuss your legislation on safety standards for crude-by-rail transport. The City of Bellingham has advocated for increasing the standards for rail cars in a previous letter to Secretary Foxx and the Department of Transportation and a City Council resolution calling for the same. While we anticipate that new standards will be introduced soon, we want to again state our support for implementing increased safety standards for rail-tank cars, and encourage efforts of industry to retrofit or replace rail-tank cars as soon as possible to meet puncture resistant and other safety standards.

Furthermore, we continue to advocate for both state and federal legislative efforts to identify communities at particular risk for spills and accidents from added freight traffic carrying crude and other hazardous materials, and to provide the resources for identified communities to adequately mitigate and manage these new or heightened risks.

As Mayor, I serve as a member of the Association of Washington Cities' rail safety committee, and they are asking for a stronger local voice for decision making on rail issues. The main issue for local jurisdictions are resources for local first responders and a greater input in policies that are developed for at-grade crossings, safety, and adequate notification of rail-car content and appropriate emergency response. And, the City Council has adopted rail safety efforts as one of the main legislative agenda items.

Thank you for your continued efforts. Rail safety is of vital interest to our community and region, and we appreciate your understanding and advocacy for unique safety concerns through densely populated areas. Please do not hesitate to contact if we can provide any assistance during this process.

Sincerely,

Kelli Linville
Kelli Linville
Mayor

Pinky Vargas
Pinky Vargas
City Council President Pro Tempore

cc: Senator Patty Murray
Secretary Anthony Foxx, Department of Transportation
Director Shaun Donovan, Office of Management and Budget

Attachments: 2/4/14 Letter to Secretary Foxx; 1/27/14 City Council Resolution 2014-03