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September 29, 2022

Governor Jay Inslee  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

The Port of Bremerton (POB) is strongly in support of the letter sent to you from Bremerton Mayor, Greg Wheeler, for temporary expansion of Kitsap Transit passenger-only ferry service on the current Washington State Ferry (WSF) Bremerton-Seattle route.

The WSF plays a vital role in Kitsap County's economic infrastructure. For over 70 years, WSF has provided essential access to connect communities, including the City of Bremerton. The dependance on the ferry system impacts our residents, commuters, trade, and visitors. Recent WSF service cuts due to a lack of workers, increased retirements, vessel maintenance, among other issues have created significant complications on ferry travel.

Reduced WSF capacity significantly impacts all Kitsap communities, and the Bremerton route has felt the greatest deficit. The Bremerton ferry one-boat service creates hours-long gaps between sailings, which is expected to continue until at least 2023. Hundreds of thousands of passengers that depend on a stable and reliable WSF Bremerton marine highway are encountering serious hardship and financial impacts due to reduced service levels. This situation also significantly impacts Bremerton's low-income and traditionally underserved citizens who have fewer transportation and employment opportunities.

We support a request to the state to fund an increase in Kitsap Transit passenger-only ferry (POF) sailings on an interim basis to assist WSF with their current Bremerton-Seattle schedule until it can be fully restored.

These adversities impact Bremerton residents who commute to their jobs in health care, construction, equipment repair, and other essential employment in the Seattle region. The increase in employment by the US Navy increases the hardships by people who depend on this mode of transportation to get to their workplace here in Bremerton. Medical patients are also confronting more travel time and stress to attend appointments or receive treatment.

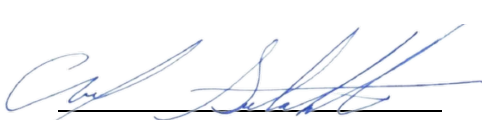
It is clear that reliable ferry service operations are essential to our economy as well as the quality of life of our citizens. Adding temporary Kitsap Transit passenger-only trips is a solution that would add capacity, improve access, and support the livelihoods of Bremerton citizens and businesses.

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We strongly support the solution proposed by the City of Bremerton and urge you to advocate for this initiative.

Sincerely,

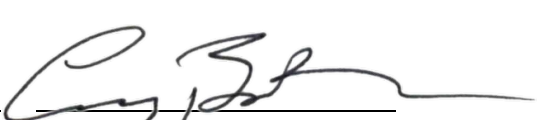
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