

## **DRAFT – 2021 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

### **WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

Support federal policy that increases the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) budget and funds critical navigation projects on the Columbia River.

Invest in the Corps' Operations & Maintenance (O&M) budget to support FY 2022 funding needs for the navigation projects that support the Columbia River ports' efforts to maintain 43' shipping channel.

- Ensure the implementation of the 2020 Water Resources Development Act (P.L. 116-260), that outlines specific categories for use of O&M for navigation projects, does not compromise historic O&M needs.

Provide \$25.609 million in the Corps' Construction account to finish the rehabilitation of the Mouth of the Columbia River (MCR) South Jetty.

Prioritize significant and targeted resources for ports and water infrastructure in any new federal infrastructure legislation, including in any federal COVID relief or economic "stimulus" packages from the new Administration or Congress.

- The funding levels and breadth of the programs must allow U.S. public ports to compete with the level of foreign investments in their infrastructure or we risk further cargo diversion.

### **FREIGHT POLICIES & FUNDING**

Continue development of freight policies and funding programs at the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD), and other federal agencies that benefit or support public ports.

Include provisions in the 2021 reauthorization of the FAST Act (P.L. 114-94) that provide significant assistance to freight and freight-related initiatives, including increased funding for the discretionary Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program (\$5.5 billion for FY 2016-21) and formula National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) (\$7.8 billion for FY 2016-21).

Provide additional resources for freight and freight-related initiatives specifically benefitting public ports, including port-specific landside improvements and "inside the gate" activities, including in any federal COVID relief or economic "stimulus" packages from the new Administration or Congress. This includes immediately providing needed and substantial federal funding to ports following natural disasters and emergencies, including the COVID pandemic, as outlined in the recently enacted Maritime Transportation System Emergency Relief Program (MTSERP) (P.L. 116-283).

Include a new competitive bridge program in the 2021 reauthorization of the FAST Act or in any federal COVID relief or economic "stimulus" packages from the new Administration or Congress.

- This program should provide significant federal resources for major bridge replacement or rehabilitation projects, such as for the replacement or rehabilitation of the I-5/Columbia River Bridge.

Support a minimum of \$2 billion for the BUILD competitive grant program for FY 2022.

Provide a minimum of \$250 million for the MARAD Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) for FY 2022.

Support policies, programs, and federal agencies that promote freight rail competitiveness. This will increase the marketability of Terminal 5, where significant local and federal investments were made to complete the \$251 million West Vancouver Freight Access Project (WVFAP).

Enforce administrative rules and support legislative proposals for the safe shipment of goods, including energy products and hazardous materials, by road, rail, and water.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Support revitalization of the port's Terminal 1 waterfront project, a mixed-use development with plans to construct a public market, hotel, retail, commercial and community spaces.

- Federal funding is a critical component in moving this project forward and the port is working to identify opportunities within current federal programs, as well as new grant opportunities in forthcoming legislation or requesting statutory changes to existing programs. For example, the MARAD PDIP could be modified to include support for tourism and/or river cruise infrastructure at our nation's ports. Programs related to ports infrastructure in any new federal infrastructure legislation could also cover these types of activities, including in any federal COVID relief or economic "stimulus" packages from the new Administration or Congress.

Support permanent renewal of the New Market Tax Credits (NMTC) as a tool to attract new industry, including manufacturing and industrial development, to the Port of Vancouver and Southwest Washington. The NMTC has been extended through 2025.

Extend the IRS Opportunity Zones' benefits beyond the 2026 tax year. These tools have just begun to bring needed long-term investments that impact the port, support our partners, and providing quality jobs to our region. Extending these federal tools ensures we will continue to reap their economic development benefits intended by Congress.

Ensure navigation on the Columbia River is protected as Columbia River Treaty negotiations continue. This includes recognizing the impacts of river flows on sediment management and vessel maneuverability on the Lower Columbia River.

Support pro-export and pro-port national trade policies and practices. Specifically, oppose unreasonable and arbitrary tariffs on imported commodities such as steel, and other restrictions that could result in retaliatory actions on key Northwest exports like agricultural products.

Adopt initiatives that promote international trade in the Pacific Northwest with an emphasis on exports.

## **ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT**

Support efforts by the new Administration or Congress to address Climate Change, including establishing grant programs that incentivize ports and their partners to become more environmentally sustainable and efficient.

Ensure the Biological Opinion for the Columbia River continues to protect the environment and fish habitat while preserving regional economic vitality.

Provide adequate funding for federal agencies, including the Corps, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries (NMFS), to efficiently process permits. Lack of funding for permitting or administrative changes that compromise existing permits could impact safety, significantly increase costs, impact economic development, and affect the environment.

Ensure NOAA, and other federal regulatory agencies, are applying permitting standards and processes that are consistent, predictable, and not overly burdensome across regions, especially when it comes to waterfront maintenance (repairs), replacement, and enhancements projects as opposed to new construction or significant expansion.

Federal streamlining efforts to renew Nationwide Permits earlier than expected should ensure existing permits are maintained.

Adopt a full and permanent renewal of the Production Tax Credit (PTC) that greatly promotes the port's vibrant wind turbine business. It has been extended through 2021, so they can now begin construction in 2021 and receive the credit but are only eligible for a 60% PTC.

Include \$150 million for the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act program in FY 2022. This program has greatly reduced diesel emissions at our nation's ports.