

Tavernor, Bernadette (ECY)

From: whatcomdocs@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, November 01, 2011 5:42 PM
Subject: Your message to the Governor: Commerce/Business

<APP>CUSTOM
<FIRST>Whatcom</FIRST>
<LAST>Docs</LAST>
<EMAIL>whatcomdocs@gmail.com</EMAIL>
<ADDR1>PO Box 4444</ADDR1>
<ADDR2></ADDR2>
<CITY>Bellingham</CITY>
<STATE>WA</STATE>
<ADDR4></ADDR4>
<COUNTRY></COUNTRY>
<ZIP>98227</ZIP>
<PHONE></PHONE>

<MSG>Dear Governor Gregoire,

We are a writing you to renew our request for a Health Impact Assessment to be performed in the evaluation of the Gateway Pacific Terminal Project in Ferndale, Washington. As you know, if approved, the Gateway Pacific Terminal would be the largest coal exporting port in all of North America. In addition to the terminal itself, the project would also include the transport of nearly 50 million tons of coal across the entire state of Washington every year, traveling through every major city including Spokane, Tacoma, Seattle, and Everett. This translates into an additional 18 or more mile-and-a-half trains along this train corridor every day and 400 cap-sized ships (the largest in the world) crisscrossing the Puget Sound every year.

In June of this year, we first contacted you with our concerns and in August, we shared with you an in-depth, although by no means exhaustive, review of the available medical literature pertaining to the human health impacts of such a proposal. Our findings can be found at: <http://www.coaltrainfacts.org/whatcom-docs-position-statement-and-appendices>. We found ample evidence that diesel particulate matter from the massive increased train traffic, coal dust from the trains and the port, noise from the trains, and delays to emergency

response vehicles and personnel due to the trains would have severe and irrevocable negative impacts on the health of the residents of the cities along this corridor. During that investigation, we undertook a crude estimation of the amount of pollution generated by the proposed increase in train traffic and when we asked the Environmental Protection Agency to confirm our calculations, they too were astounded by the potential increase.

Governor, in 2007, it was you who signed into law Senate Bill 6099 requiring that a Health Impact Assessment be performed in the rebuilding of SR 520. If the rebuilding of a previously existing bridge warranted such an assessment, it would be inconceivable how the Gateway Pacific Terminal would not warrant equal scrutiny. The Gateway Pacific Terminal Project is a proposal that is unprecedented in magnitude for this state and would have far reaching, and potentially severely negative, impacts on the residents across the entire State of Washington.

In recent weeks, the labor unions have refuted some our findings. We as physicians have no other agenda than to ensure the health and safety of the people of our state. The only way to truly understand the human health impacts of this proposal, and the only way to ensure that true informed consent is given if this proposal is approved, is by undertaking a comprehensive Health Impact Assessment by a unbiased agency, such as the State Department of Health. This is well within their mandate and completely consistent with their mission statement. To do otherwise would fall short in their obligation to 'protect and improve the health of people in Washington State.'

Sincerely,

Dale Abbott, MD

Camilla Allen, MD

Daniel Austin, MD

Diane Arvin, MD

Barbara Bachman, MD

Laura Backer, MD

Kristi Bailey, MD

Terri Blackburn, MD

Terri Blackburn, MD
Pete Beglin, MD
Claire Beiser, MD, MPH
Don Berry, MD
Richard Binder, MD
Nancy Bischoff, MD
Bruce Bowden, MD
Kirk Brownell, MD
Allan Buehler, MD
David Cahalan, MD
Soren Carlsen, MD
Michael Chmel, MD
Joshua Cohen, MD
Andrew Coletti, MD
Paul Conner, MD
Kirstin Curtis, ARNP
Jan Dank, MD
Marc Davis, MD
Joe Deck, MD
Katherine Dickinson, MD
Peter Dillon, MD
Thang Do, MD
Mark Doherty, MD
Kevin Dooms, MD
Jim Eggen, MD
Jerry Eisner, MD
David Elkayam, MD
Laurie Emert, MD
John Erbstoesz, MD
Worth Everett, MD
Anneliese Floyd, MD
Ryan Fortna, MD, PhD
Dianne Foster, ARNP
Randy Frank, DO
Eric Frankenfeld, MD
Jonathan Franklin, MD
Anthony Gargano, MD
Ken Gass, MD, PhD

Jeremy Getz, MD
Robert Gibb, MD
Stan Gilbert, MD
Martha Gillham, MD
Lorna Gober, MD
David Goldman, MD
Aaron Gonter, MD
Erin Griffith, MD
Deborah Hall, MD
Tom Hall, MD
William Hall, MD
David Hansen, MD
James Harle, MD
Emil Hecht, MD
Grayce Hein, ARNP
Michael Hejtmanek, MD
Harry Herdman, MD
David Hoeft, MD
Marcy Hipskind, MD
John Holroyd, MD
Jim Holstine, DO
Sherry Holtzman, MD
Will Hong, MD
John Hoyt, MD
Bao Huynh, MD
Kellie Jacobs, MD
Meg Jacobson, MD
Gertrude James, ARNP
Frank James, MD
Helen James, MD
Lisa Johnson, ARNP
David Jessup, MD
Mitchell Kahn, MD
Daniel Kim, MD
Annie Kiesau, MD
Carter Kiesau, MD
Gail Knops, MD
Joost Knops, MD

Ann Knowles, MD
Andrew Kominsky, MD
Pamela Laughlin, MD
Shawna Laursen, MD
Sandy George Lawrence, MD
Josie Lee, MD
Tyler Leedom, DO
Rick Leone, MD, PhD
Linda Leum, MD
Hank Levine, MD
Chris Lewis, DO
Serge Lindner, MD
Kelly Lloyd, MD
Bill Lombard, MD
Jena Lopez, MD
Jonathan Lowy, MD
Leasa Lowy, MD
Thomas Ludwig, MD
Bruce Mackay, MD
Margaret Mamolen, MD
Troy J. Markus, DO
Vincent Matteucci, MD
Dick McClenahan, MD
Marianne McElroy, PA
Monica Mahal, MD
Scott McGuinness, MD
Judson Moore, PA
David Morison, MD
Gib Morrow, MD
Larry Moss, MD
Sara Mostad, MD, PhD
Ward Naviaux, MD
John Neutzmann, DO
Deborah Oksenberg, MD
David Olson, MD
Rob Olson, MD
Patricia Otto, MD
Tracy Ouellette, MD

Mark Owings, MD, PhD
Evelyn Oxenford, ARNP
Clark Parrish, MD
Mike Pietro, MD
Trevor Pitsch, MD
Denise Plaisier, PA
Suneil Polley, ND, Lac
Ronda Pulse, MD
Gita Rabbani, MD
Andris Radvany, MD
Jon Ransom, MD
Christoph Reitz, MD
Niles Roberts, MD
William Scott Sandeno, MD
Paul Sarvasy, MD
Neal Saxe, MD
James Schoenecker, MD
Julie Seavello, MD
R. Milton Schayes, MD
Barbara Schickler, ARNP, CNM
Melana Schimke, MD
Luther Schutz, MD
Miriam Shapiro, MD
Janine Shaw, MD
John Shaw, MD
Mary Ellen Shields, MD
Hannah Sheinin, MD
Russell Sheinkopf, MD
Lora Sherman, MD
Alan Shurman, MD
Don Slack, MD
Robert Slind, MD
Chris Spilker, MD
Bonnie Sprague, ARNP
Scott Stockburger, MD
Berle Stratton, MD
Jenny Sun, MD
Gregory Sund, MD

Mary Swanson, MD
Warren Taranow, DO
Michael Taylor, MD
M. Greg Thompson, MD, MPH
Teresa Thornberg, MD
Loch Trimmingham, MD
Elizabeth Vennos, MD
Steve Wagoner, MD
April Wakefield Pagels, MD
Heather Whitaker, ARNP
Sara Wells, ARNP
Anne Welsh, MD
Greg Welsh, MD
Susan Willis, ARNP
David Wisner, MD
Steven Wisner, MD
Todd Witte, MD
Ginny Wolff, MD
Greg Wolgamot, MD, PhD
Stephen Woods, MD
Darla Woolman, PA
Chao-ying Wu, MD
Jessica Yoos, MD
Ellen Young, MD</MSG>

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