Washington State Tree Fruit Association
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May 7, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to share our Association's support for The Northwest Seaport Alliance's (NWSA) proposal *Pierce County Terminal Efficiency Project* submitted to the U.S. Department of Transportation's 2024 Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) funding opportunity.

Our Association represents the growers, packers, and marketers of apples, pears, and cherries produced in Washington. Washington state is the number one producer of all three of these crops in the United States, and nearly 30% of these crops are exported with a substantial portion moving through the NWSA's terminals.

The NWSA project will support the PIDP program's goals of improving the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of goods into, out of, around, and within the Port. The project proposes improvements to Pierce County Terminal in the NWSA's South Harbor that will make the cargo terminal more energy efficient, expand capacity for refrigerated containers, and modernize the transfer zone to allow the terminal to operate more cost-effectively.

Expanding refrigerated capacity at the terminal will benefit Northwest agricultural exporters, who have weathered several difficult years of supply chain upheaval. The Project will increase the competitiveness of exports and reduce costs to U.S. farmers, ranchers, and other producers in getting their goods to international markets.

The Project will also allow the NWSA to advance its Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy goal of eliminating seaport-related emissions by 2050. The NWSA marine cargo operations currently support 58,400 jobs and more than $4 billion in labor income across the Washington state economy.

This project is an important step in making a key U.S. trade gateway more efficient and improving our region's competitiveness with Canadian seaports and supply chains, and we urge its full funding in the PIDP grant program.

Sincerely,



Jon DeVaney
President