



State Senator Curtis King, Transportation Chair
305 John A. Cherberg Building
PO Box 40414
Olympia, WA 98504-0414

May 22, 2015

OneGorge Advocacy Group
c/o Port of Hood River
1000 E. Port Marina Drive
Hood River, OR 97031

RE: Tax-Avoidant Trucking on WA State Route 14

Dear Senator King:

The undersigned participants of the OneGorge Advocacy Group wish to express their strong support for any effort to mitigate tax-avoidant trucking now causing serious safety problems, traffic congestion, and damage to road surfaces and bridges in several Gorge communities. This is a public safety and infrastructure problem that has a direct impact on all communities of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area as well as those outside the NSA reliant on Gorge highways for the transport of goods (i.e., Yakima and Tri-Cities to the east and Vancouver and Portland to the west).

Although Interstate-84 would seem to be the obvious best choice for heavy haul trucks traveling through the Gorge in terms of safety and speed, Washington State Route 14 has become an increasingly popular route as more truckers choose to exploit the difference between the two states' taxing methods. Oregon charges heavy trucks a weight-mile tax. Washington charges a fuel tax. By fueling up in Oregon, crossing a bridge to Washington and travelling along SR 14, truckers avoid paying road taxes in either state. This is a substantial savings for the trucking companies, but a critical loss for our roads and communities. We are also concerned that a significant number of truckers using SR 14 might be doing so to avoid safety compliance enforcement that would normally occur at weigh stations.

We understand the Washington State Transportation Commission is exploring the possibility of converting from a fuel tax to a road usage charge. We believe unification of the road-tax systems would greatly reduce the negative impacts of heavy haul trucking on the small communities along the Washington shore of the Gorge. The current losses in road tax revenue to both states would be recovered and the wear and tear damage to the main streets of Washington border towns like Stevenson and Bingen would be lessened. Please do what you can to help solve this problem.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned, facilitated by OneGorge

Frank Cox

Frank Cox, Mayor
City of Stevenson, WA



Maria Foley

Maria Foley, Executive Director
Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce



David Poucher

David Poucher, Mayor
City of White Salmon, WA



Pat Albaugh

Pat Albaugh, Executive Director
Skamania County Economic Development Council



John Hardham

John Hardham, Owner
Lightwave Communications



Brian Thomas Mullis

Brian Mullis, Executive Board Chair & Founder
Sustainable Travel International



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Mullis', written over a horizontal line.

Michael S. McElwee, Executive Director
Port of Hood River



Tammara Toppel

Tammara Toppel, Director of Human Resources
Custom Interface, Inc.



GORDON ZIMMERMAN

Gordon Zimmerman, City Administrator
City of Cascade Locks



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Koch', written over a horizontal line.

Paul Koch, Interim General Manager
Port of Cascade Locks

