

Export Terminals Mean Jobs

By: Herb Krohn

The State of Washington has an opportunity right now, to expand our ports and to secure the region's position as a global trade leader for decades. Private industry, using private capital, is ready right now to put people to work expanding our export facilities to allow us to export more bulk commodities including ores and minerals like iron, coal and potash, as well as agricultural products including wheat, rye and grains. Unfortunately, there are plenty of folks who want to stop these projects and in the end jobs won't be created here and the exports will come from other countries.

In contrast there is bipartisan support to keep Boeing manufacturing in the state. Our Governor is pitching in to help in that effort and has even asked for an expedited environmental review process. He could have asked for a review of the environmental implications of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions where the components for these planes are built. Many of which come from China where they use coal to power Boeing's parts manufacturing. Also to his credit the Governor chooses not to consider the GHG emissions emitted from the utilization of planes manufactured at Boeing by the world's airline industry, which is among the highest carbon emitting activities in the world. We applaud him for these non-obstructionist decisions.

What we don't applaud is his inconsistent approach to job creation. The Governor takes a different approach when it comes to building trade and transportation jobs that would be created by the proposed new export facilities. There he wants a comprehensive review (read delay) of the effects the items being exported have on the world's climate. His request caters to the folks who want to not just delay, but kill these projects and deny thousands of people construction employment as well as the many hundreds of permanent good middle class jobs they will create.

It's time for the Governor and his "save the world" partners to quit being obstructionists and allow these projects to proceed. We are not even asking for his help in creating all these jobs, even though most of the blue collar folks who will be put to work voted for him.

All we are asking is that our Governor allow the port expansions to proceed through the regular accepted environmental scoping and permitting processes.