



CITY OF STEVENSON

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7121 E Loop Road, PO Box 371, Stevenson, WA 98648

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

March 20, 2015

Re: Out of State Truck Traffic

Dear Senator King,

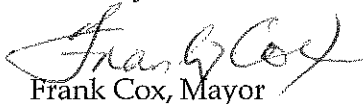
The City of Stevenson, along with all other cities along the Washington/Oregon border, suffers from excessive truck traffic on Washington SR 14 due to a difference in tax methods between the two states. Oregon charges heavy trucks a weight-mile tax. Washington charges a fuel tax. Savvy truckers purchase their fuel in Oregon to avoid paying a State fuel tax, cross one of the bridges to Washington, and travel along SR 14 to avoid paying the weight-mile tax. This results in a large number of Oregon trucks using Washington roads to avoid paying taxes to either state. It results in extra wear and tear on Washington's roads as well as a large amount of non-local truck traffic through Washington border towns like Stevenson.

As you know, State Route 14 is the main street through downtown Stevenson. The large number of unnecessary trucks driving through downtown Stevenson negatively impacts pedestrians and erodes the experience for tourists exploring our beautiful downtown area.

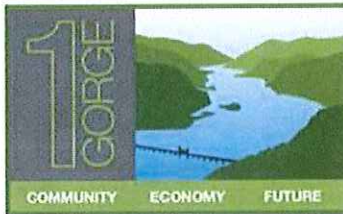
I understand the Washington State Transportation Commission is exploring the possibility of converting from a fuel tax to a road usage charge. Converting to a road usage charge would alleviate the current incentive for Oregon trucks to free-load on Washington roads.

Please do what you can to help with this problem.

Sincerely,



Frank Cox, Mayor



May 22, 2015

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

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



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



Paul Koch, Interim General Manager
Port of Cascade Locks





Washington State Senate

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14th Legislative District

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June 5, 2015

The Honorable Frank Cox
Mayor, City of Stevenson
PO Box 371
Stevenson, WA 98648

Dear Mayor Cox:

Thank you for your letter regarding truck traffic on Highway 14. I appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns.

The Legislature passed a current law transportation budget on May 28, 2015 that does include continued funding for the Washington State Transportation Commission to evaluate the road usage charge concept. The committee must report its findings to the Governor and the legislature at the end of 2015.

The state of Oregon is also considering the pay-per-mile concept. They will begin a test phase on July 1 for up to 5,000 volunteers.

We will be watching how the Oregon pilot project plays out and the results of the Commission's findings at the end of the year before any decisions are made.

Thank you again for your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis King", written over the printed name.

Senator Curtis King