

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I am writing in support of the City of Tacoma's application for a planning grant through the Department of Transportation's Fiscal Year 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program. The City of Tacoma is seeking \$7.68 million for its Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge Replacement project.

The Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge is a critical commercial arterial in the Puget Sound region. Originally opened in 1927, the bridge served approximately 15,000 vehicles per day, connecting residents and commuters to family-supporting jobs at the Port of Tacoma and surrounding industrial areas. The bridge also functioned as an alternative route to the overburdened I-5 corridor, alleviating traffic congestion between Tacoma and Fife. However, the century-old bridge failed inspection and was subsequently closed in 2023. The bridge's indefinite closure has significantly disrupted the flow of freight and commuter traffic between the cities of Tacoma and Fife, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, and the Port of Tacoma, a key West Coast port and Commercial Strategic Seaport for the Department of Defense and Joint Base Lewis-McChord. Prior to its closure, weight restrictions already prevented freight from utilizing the bridge, limiting its capacity to support regional supply chains.

If successful, the City of Tacoma will use this funding to complete the second phase of planning and design work necessary to replace the bridge. Specifically, BUILD grant funding would support completion of 100 percent design and plan sets and all required environmental documentation and permitting including National Environmental Policy Act compliance, geotechnical and hydraulic investigations, railroad coordination and permits, final utility relocation plans, community engagement, and construction bid documents. The construction of a new bridge will restore multimodal and freight connectivity across the region, increase the efficiency of local traffic patterns and goods movement, and provide users with renewed access to housing, employment, recreation, and commerce opportunities in adjacent neighborhoods.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of the City of Tacoma's application to the BUILD grant program.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell

United States Senator