

PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – October 24, 2003

SOUND TRANSIT MOVES AHEAD

Sound Transit received great news this week when the Chairman of the House Transportation committee lifted his objections and agreed to let Sound Transit's federal funding proceed.

Today, the federal government signed a \$500 million full funding grant agreement, allowing Sound Transit to begin building light rail in the Puget Sound.

This is great news for travelers and residents throughout the Puget Sound. Despite the hurdles that have been thrown at it, Sound Transit is well on its way to moving passengers and reducing congestion throughout the Puget Sound.

The \$500 million in federal funds for this project will not only help us reduce congestion, but will help create thousands of jobs designing, engineering, and building Link Light Rail. For jobs and transportation this announcement is vital.

ANTI-SPAM LEGISLATION APPROVED BY SENATE

With my strong support, this week the Senate passed the "CAN SPAM Act." It tells "spammers" that unsolicited email is not just annoying; it could soon be a crime.

This bill would impose penalties on high-volume spammers, prohibit false or misleading subject lines, and require senders to include a valid return address.

Email is an important communication tool, but its value has been undermined by the high volume of unwanted spam. I hope this new legislation will mean less time hitting 'delete' and more time communicating.

COAST GUARD INTRODUCES PLAN FOR MARITIME SECURITY

I am pleased to announce that the Coast Guard this week released its final plan to improve passenger vessel security across the country – including on Washington's ferries. It's a big improvement over the Coast Guard's first proposal.

Last October, it was reported that the Coast Guard planned to impose a strict new security regime that could have subjected Washington's 26 million annual ferry passengers to cumbersome airport-style screening.

I urged the Coast Guard to gather input from local stakeholders (like Washington State Ferries and the Washington State Patrol) before issuing a final rule, and that's what the Coast Guard has done. The new, more flexible plan will improve safety without compromising service for our communities.

The Coast Guard deserves tremendous credit for developing a plan that will ensure security while keeping Washington state passengers moving.

I urge the Administration to step up and provide the federal funding needed to keep our passengers moving and our waterways secure.

VOTE AGAINST PAY RAISE

On Thursday, I voted against a pay raise for Members of Congress. Despite my opposition, the measure passed the Senate, as it had passed the House on September 4th by a vote of 240-173.

FULL SENATE PASSES TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

I am proud to announce Senate passage of millions of dollars in federal funding for Washington state transportation priorities in the 2004 Senate Transportation, Treasury, and General Government spending bill. As the highest-ranking Democrat on the Transportation Subcommittee, I included the funds for our state's top priorities – for every corner of the state. This funding comes in addition to grant money that our state receives annually from the federal government. In fiscal year 2004, Washington state will receive \$543,767,926 in Federal Highway Administration grants and \$101,731,719 in Federal Transit Administration grant funding.

At a time when both state and federal budgets are stretched thin, these dollars will go a long way to providing good-paying design, engineering, and construction jobs today and attracting new business for future growth. I will continue to stand up for our state and work to invest in valuable infrastructure at home while we honor our commitments abroad.

Here are a few of the projects that receive funding in the Senate bill:

- **Spokane, University District Transportation Safety Enhancement Project (\$1 million)**
- **US 12 Widening, Wallula Junction to Walla Walla (\$3 million)**
- **Intermodal Transload Facility, Quincy, WA (\$2 million)**
- **SR 31, All Weather Roadway Construction and Widening (Pend Oreille County) (\$1.6 million)**
- **Clark County Transit, Bus Replacement (\$3 million)**
- **Chehalis, I-5 Exit 79 Interchange Bridge Replacement (\$3 million)**
- **Vancouver, Pedestrian Bridge (\$500,000)**
- **Bellingham, San Juan Boulevard (\$1.225 million)**
- **I-5 Second Street Bridge, Mt. Vernon (\$3 million)**
- **Skagit County, 3-Bridge Corridor Project (\$800,000)**
- **Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe – Access Road (\$2.3 million)**
- **Kitsap Transit, Marina Expansion & Kitsap Transit Passenger Ferry Terminal (\$3 million)**
- **Jefferson Transit Maintenance Facility (Port Townsend) (\$1 million)**
- **Seattle, Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall (\$1 million)**
- **FAST Corridor (\$3 million)**
- **King County, Metro Clean Air Buses (\$5 million)**
- **Everett, Air Traffic Control Tower (\$2 million)**
- **Yakima Grade Separations (\$1 million)**

For all the transportation projects in your area, visit:
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