

[Labor and Business Leaders Call for Reasonable Reviews of Proposed Export Projects](#)

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SEATTLE, Wash. – Labor and business leaders responded forcefully to the call from Governors of Oregon and Washington for expanded federal review in the approval of coal export projects in the Northwest. They reiterated strong support for the proposed bulk export terminals and expressed concern over the precedent that expanded regulation would have on future exports from the Northwest.

The governors wrote a joint letter to the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) urging that it undertake a thorough review of greenhouse gas emissions and other air quality impacts prior to any final decisions on coal export projects. Three proposed projects are currently undergoing rigorous government environmental impact assessments in the Northwest. If approved, these port projects would expand trade and exports to Asia and the rest of the world, contributing to the regional economy in addition to creating thousands of good family-wage jobs at these facilities.

“Just last week the U.S. Senate voted to oppose any new requirement or regulation that federal agencies account for greenhouse gas emissions in their analyses under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Such a requirement could be particularly damaging to the Northwest, where trade and exports are so vital to the local economy,” said Lauri Hennessey, spokeswoman for the trade advocacy group the Alliance for Northwest Jobs & Exports, which represents nearly 400,000 workers and 46,000 businesses.

“We have always been and remain committed to making these projects a reality,” said Mike Elliott, Spokesman for the Washington State Legislative Board of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET). “We will continue working with the Oregon and Washington Governors towards the best outcome for these multi-commodity facilities.”

“This is déjà vu all over again,” said John Stuhlmiller, CEO of the Washington Farm Bureau. “We saw this kind of intervention when the CEQ stepped in 20 years ago on the issue of federal timber harvests in the Northwest. It didn’t work then, and it won’t work now. Tying GHG emissions to export projects is a bad idea and an ineffective policy for addressing the Governor’s climate policy objectives. It sets a precedent that could be used to slow or stop exports of agriculture and other bulk commodities – hurting our trade economy.”

“Existing federal law requires exhaustive environmental review of development projects to ensure that our environment is protected,” said Don Brunell, president of the Association of Washington Business. “In addition, Washington has some of the most stringent environmental standards in the nation and every project must meet or exceed those standards in order to go forward. Imposing additional, unwarranted and unnecessary regulatory burdens in an attempt to derail a particular project would set a dangerous precedent that will jeopardize our state's economic future,” Brunell added. “We continue to support a balanced approach that ensures both environmental protection and economic opportunity.”

“Virtually every product we export, from cars to turbines to planes to grains, has an environmental impact,” said Ross Eisenberg, vice president of energy and resources policy for the National Association of Manufacturers. “The already-too-long permitting process for new projects—a process that takes on average 3.4 years—would become completely unmanageable if the law were expanded to require the type of review the two governors are now seeking.”

Trade and exports have played a central role in the Washington and Oregon economies for decades. One in four jobs in the region is tied to the trade industry, which annually produces hundreds of millions in tax revenues. Economic studies show the private investment proposed for five new bulk export terminals would create thousands of new jobs and generate millions in additional tax revenue for schools and other services in Washington and Oregon.

“We disagree with this approach and believe current regulations ensure rigorous environmental review of each individual project. We will continue our efforts to make the case to Governors Inslee and Kitzhaber, as well as others, that these terminal projects are good for our region and can be done right,” said Hennessey.

About the Alliance for Northwest Jobs & Exports

The Alliance for Northwest Jobs & Exports is a non-profit trade organization advancing export infrastructure to strengthen regional trade economies in the Pacific Northwest. The Alliance represents a strong labor and business coalition comprised of trade, transport, labor organizations, manufacturing, businesses, civic groups and others who support expanding regional exports for the economic benefits.

For more information, visit www.CreateNorthwestJobs.com.

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