



SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RON WESEN, First District
KENNETH A. DAHLSTEDT, Second District
SHARON D. DILLON, Third District

February 12, 2009

The Honorable Rick Larsen
United States House of Representatives
107 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Larsen:

The Skagit County Board of County Commissioners requests your support for \$600,000 in Fiscal Year 2010 for funding the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Skagit River Bridge Replacement Preliminary Engineering. It is our understanding that the City of Burlington has submitted a formal request on this matter and Skagit County supports this request.

Specifically, we ask that Congress:

"Provide \$600,000 for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Skagit River Bridge Replacement Preliminary Engineering, Skagit County, Washington."

Skagit County also supports Burlington's concept of forming a Federal / State / Private / Local partnership to replace the aging BNSF Skagit River Bridge. All of the technical studies indicate that this bridge must be modified or replaced in order to reduce the risk of catastrophic flooding of the County's main urban areas and transportation corridors and the Commissioners believe a partnership project is the only viable mechanism. The City of Burlington is currently working with the state and the railroad to further explore the possibilities of forming the partnership and has submitted a State Freight Rail Assistance application in support of this work.

The Skagit County Board of County Commissioners appreciates all the work you have done to provide funding for local flood control efforts in the past, and we appreciate your consideration of this request. Getting the money together to replace this bridge is a very difficult prospect and forming a public-private partnership to replace private infrastructure will not be easy. Nevertheless, we think it may be the best solution. Please feel free to contact Tim Holloran, Skagit County Administrator, at (360) 336-9300 or the local sponsor if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Chairman

Sharon D. Dillon, Commissioner

Ron Wesen, Commissioner