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### Washington Public Ports Association Executive Director Recruitment

The Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA) is currently recruiting for an Executive Director. This leadership position will carry out the strategic mission of WPPA and manage operations to provide valued services to its members, including government relations, education, and strong advocacy for economic development, land use, trade, the environment, aviation and long-range planning for public assets. The Executive Director will provide leadership and management to a staff of seven and oversee an annual budget in excess of \$1 million. The full recruiting announcement and application instructions can be found [here](#).

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### Freight Rail Shipping Fair Market Act Introduced in the House

During multiple hearings of the Railroad Subcommittee of the House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and a Surface Transportation Board hearing, dissatisfaction with inconsistent and increasingly unreliable service was expressed by rail customers, particularly customers in the agriculture and energy industries. In response, Chair of the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Donald M. Payne, Jr. (D-NJ), Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture David Scott (D-GA), and Chair of the Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture Jim Costa (D-CA) introduced the Freight Rail Shipping Fair Market Act on August 2.

According to the [press release](#) issued, in addition to reauthorizing the Surface Transportation Board (Board) which regulates the freight rail system, the bill would level the playing field to ensure a fair market for the Class I railroads and rail customers. Specifically the legislation:

- “Strengthens the Board’s authority to address rail service emergencies;
- Requires rail contracts to include service delivery standards and remedies, while leaving details to be privately negotiated between parties;
- Provides the Board with clear direction to resolve common carrier obligation complaints;
- Creates financial incentives for both railroads and their customers to efficiently move railcars;
- Supports freight railroad efforts to identify where freight is located on their systems while in transit; and
- Adequately funds the Board to allow for quicker dispute resolution when petitioned.”

The bill authorizes \$256 million over five years for the Board activities of which 5 percent must be set-aside passenger railroad activities. There is \$1 million per year for two years for studies of “freight rail competition, identifying the environmental benefits of rail, and supply chain data.”

To read the text of the bill, click [here](#).

To read the section by section summary, click [here](#).

To read the fact sheet, click [here](#).

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## WSDOT Consolidated Grant Programs Open

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The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is accepting applications for the 2023-2025 [Consolidated Grant](#) program. Consolidated grants provide funds for public transportation improvements within and between rural communities; transportation services between cities; purchases of new buses and equipment; and public transportation services to seniors and people with disabilities.

Eligible project types are operations, mobility management, capital, and planning. Nonprofit organizations, tribes, public transit agencies, and local agencies in the state of Washington are invited to apply.

Consolidated Grant applications are available in the [Grants Management System](#) and are due by 3 p.m. PDT Thursday, Oct. 27, 2022.

For additional information, please review the [notice of funding opportunity](#).

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## PNWA Permitting Webinar with New Federal Agency

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**Save the Date** – PNWA will be hosting the following webinar:

**Permit Streamlining Opportunities for Ports and Waterways  
Presentation by the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council  
Monday, August 22, 2022  
11:00am – 12:30pm Pacific  
Virtual Meeting – link TBD**

With the passage of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation ( [FAST](#) ) Act, also known as “[FAST-41](#),” in 2015, the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council ( [FPISC](#) ) was created to improve the Federal environmental [review](#) and authorization process for eligible infrastructure projects. The eligible projects tend to be large and complex (\$200m+) or cross multiple jurisdictional boundaries. The FPISC projects can cover a variety of sectors including conventional or renewable energy production, electricity transmission, surface transportation, aviation, ports and waterways, water resource projects, broadband, pipelines, manufacturing, etc. The FPISC is actively interested in helping with large transportation and port projects throughout the Pacific Northwest.

PNWA staff met previously with the FPISC and stated that while many of our regional projects may not rise to the \$200m threshold individually, a combination of projects currently in the permitting backlog and coming online from the bipartisan infrastructure law, could likely rise to over \$200m together. The FPISC was interested in providing a presentation to the PNWA membership to share information about their mission, the project sectors covered by the agency, and how they may best

support our region. Please save the date and plan to participate in the webinar!

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