

PNWA INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

Ports and navigation stakeholders in the Northwest applaud the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. A \$1.2 trillion investment in transportation, aviation, rail, water, energy, and broadband goes a long way to modernizing U.S. ports and ensuring our nation remains a global leader in reliable, safe and efficient goods movement. The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 also provided \$3 billion investment in electrification, grid technology, equipment, vehicles, and planning efforts to reduce air pollution at ports.

Additional PNWA Infrastructure Priorities

As Congress works to build on improvements made in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and other pieces of infrastructure legislation, consider implementation actions to:

Establish a specific freight element in any new transportation initiative. PNWA advocates for freight funding programs that are truly multimodal.

Continue to increase funding for infrastructure programs. BUILD, INFRA, RRIF, PIDP, Marine Highways and other programs have been critical to facilitating port, rail, and highway improvements, and we encourage Congress to enhance or expand them. The Maritime Transportation System Emergency Relief Act (MTSERA) was created in late 2020 in response to the pandemic. The program is intended to provide aid to the maritime industry in emergencies the way the FAA provides emergency aid to the aviation industry. Some ports, particularly those in rural communities, continue to struggle with rebuilding budgets that suffered during the pandemic with revenue losses from multiple sources and increased costs for sanitation, safety equipment, and other costs. The \$3.5 billion for the MTSERA program has yet to be funded.



Increase the passenger facility charge (PFC). Increasing the PFC will help offset the cost of building and modernizing airport infrastructure, and support improvements to aviation facilities, technology and equipment. This will allow airports to better meet current air traffic demands and prepare for the future needs of the nation's aviation transportation network.

Continuing broadband investments. Ongoing broadband investments are crucial for meeting the Pacific Northwest's current and future needs. While recent infrastructure funding was helpful, it doesn't cover all needs, and restrictive federal policies limit the types of projects and communities that can benefit. These policies should be reassessed to maximize the impact of future federal investments.

Include resiliency efforts in infrastructure planning. Investing in resilient port infrastructure should be a priority for Congress to ensure ports can handle natural and manmade disasters, rising sea levels, and increasing storm surges. In the Northwest, for instance, planning for a potential Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami is crucial. Nationwide, ports play a key role in search and rescue, recovery, and delivering essential supplies. Ensuring they are prepared before disasters strike is critical for effective response and recovery.

Address regulatory system challenges. A range of issues including a significant lack of staffing capacity to process permits in a timely fashion, inconsistent implementation of policies and law, and disagreements between regulatory agencies, can lead to project cost increases, critical delays, deferred maintenance, and decreased competitiveness. Stronger oversight is needed to ensure that regulatory agencies follow the Administrative Procedure Act and other laws regarding the process to make significant regulatory changes and implement rules and guidance appropriately and consistently across the country.

Increase funding for tourism and non-freight port related opportunities. Ports often provide many other services besides freight movement creating valuable and diverse employment opportunities, particularly in rural communities. Ports often serve as business incubators, cruise destinations, recreational boating and fishing launches, commercial office parks, farmers and artisan markets, waterfront retail and residential property management, and more. However, there are limited Federal funding opportunities for ports to grow non-freight related businesses, particularly in rural communities.

