



February 3, 2022

House and Senate Members
416 Sid Snyder Ave SW
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Legislators,

We are writing to urge that if a Road Usage Charge (RUC) is enacted, any revenues derived would be protected under the 18th Amendment of the Washington State Constitution.

The Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC), which studied the feasibility of a RUC in Washington State, voted in support of 18th Amendment protection of RUC revenues in its final recommendations to the legislature in 2019.

The Commission correctly noted that if a RUC is intended to replace a gas tax, it should be “designed, implemented and the proceeds expended subject to Amendment 18.”

We agree.

Protecting those funds is the only way to ensure that a RUC “closely replicates the gas tax’s advantages as a funding mechanism.”

If a RUC is meant to replace the gas tax, then it should be treated in the same way, and like gas tax revenues, protecting a RUC under the 18th Amendment would honor the principle that users who pay the fee are ensured to receive the benefit.

The legislature has a long history of sweeping funds for other uses and the constitutional protection is the gold standard in ensuring drivers that those dollars are not at risk.

Protecting the RUC for highway expenditures directly ties the per-mile rate to actual road usage, thus providing much needed legitimacy to a new funding source that may be viewed skeptically by the public.

We recognize the importance of continued spending on infrastructure that promotes mobility and access to employment. We view infrastructure investments as part of Washington’s recovery to the damaging impacts caused by the COVID-19 response and we stand ready to work with lawmakers on finding a path forward.

It is a fact that the state cannot adequately fund its current road and highway obligations. This structural deficit is documented in the July 2020 JTC Statewide Transportation Needs Assessment Report along with the WSTC recognition that RUC revenue should be subject to protection from the 18th Amendment.

With 7,700 lane miles of pavement due for preservation work and 1,300 of those lane miles in poor condition, it is concerning that WSDOT can only repair 750 lane miles per year with current revenues. In addition, 111 bridge decks are due or past due for repair, and only two are being repaired per year. WSDOT estimates a nearly \$1 billion a year shortfall to maintain the system in a state of good repair.

Traffic congestion on the National Highway System alone cost the trucking industry nearly \$75 billion in 2016 and wasted nearly 1.2 billion hours of productivity, equivalent to more than 425,000 drivers sitting idle for a full working year. This means the trucking industry consumed an additional 6.87 billion gallons of fuel, representing approximately 13% of the industry's total fuel consumption, resulting in 67.3 million metric tons of excess carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions.

Protecting the RUC under the 18th Amendment would ensure Washington's roads and bridges will continue to have dedicated funds for necessary, ongoing maintenance, environmental, and safety improvements.

Sincerely,

AAA Washington
ACES NW Network
Allegiance Staffing
American Council of Engineering Companies
of Washington
American Rock Products
Associated Builders and Contractors Inland
Pacific
Associated Builders and Contractors
Western Washington
Associated General Contractors of WA
Association of Washington Business
Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce
Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce
Tippett Company
Bremerton Chamber of Commerce
Brown Bear Car Wash

Building Industry Association of Washington
Burlington Chamber of Commerce
Christensen, Inc.
Covington Chamber of Commerce
Cowles Company
CRH Americas Materials West - NW Region
Daniels-Brown Communications, Inc.
Delivery Express, Inc.
DTG Recycle
Eastside Transportation Association
Economic Alliance Snohomish County
Enumclaw Area Chamber of Commerce
Express Employment Professionals
Kennewick
Fast Way Freight System, Inc.
Fife Milton Edgewood Chamber of
Commerce

Food Northwest
Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce
GKR Properties
Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce
Greater Lake Stevens Chamber of Commerce
Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce
Greater Spokane, Inc.
Greater Vancouver Chamber
Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce
GKR Properties
Hal Woosley Properties, Inc.
Hobart Machined Products Inc
ICON Materials
Identity Clark County
IEDS Logistics
INRIX
International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 302
James McDevitt, Attorney at Law
Lacey South Sound Chamber of Commerce
Lakeview Light & Power
Manufacturing Industrial Council of the South Sound
Maple Valley Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce
Washington Policy Center
Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce
Northwest Aquaculture Alliance
Northwest Health Care Linen
NW Agricultural Cooperative Council
OneRedmond
Out of the Box Manufacturing LLC
Pacific Merchant Shipping Association
Penn Cove Shellfish LLC
Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce
Port of Camas-Washougal
Port of Vancouver USA
Premier Airport Shuttle by Capital Aeroporter
Pullman Chamber of Commerce
Renton Chamber of Commerce
Rowley Properties, Inc.

Signature Transport, Inc.
Silverdale Chamber of Commerce
Sky Valley Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Information Center
South Kitsap Chamber of Commerce
South Sound Chamber of Commerce
Legislative Coalition
Spokane International Airport
Sprague Pest Solutions
T. E. Walrath Trucking, Inc.
Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber
Thurston County Chamber
Toppenish Chamber of Commerce
Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce
United Parcel Service (UPS)
Vintners Logistics LLC
WA & Northern Idaho District Council of Laborers
WA Aggregates & Concrete Assoc.
WA Food Industry Association
Wallace Properties, Inc.
Washington Asphalt Pavement Association
Washington Cattlemen's Association
Washington Movers Conference
Washington Potato and Onion Association
Washington Potato Commission
Washington REALTORS
Washington Refuse & Recycling Association
Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council
Washington State Tree Fruit Association
Washington Trucking Associations
WCP SOLUTIONS
West Plains Chamber of Commerce
WestRock