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February 27, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE, 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to express my support for the Port of Bremerton's application for the FY23 RAISE grant program, which would help complete the funding necessary to replace the Port Orchard Marina Breakwater, located in my district on Puget Sound in Washington state. The Port Orchard Marina Breakwater was built in 1974 and is now more than 20 years past its designed lifespan. Unfortunately, damage from a storm last fall has forced the Port of Bremerton to close the marina to the general public. Repairs have kept it functional but are not sustainable.

The Port Orchard Marina serves as the economic driver for the City of Port Orchard contributing \$10 million to the local economy each year. The breakwater protects the only saltwater fueling station within 16 nautical miles serving the marine vessels in the movement of goods and people. The breakwater provides mooring for numerous public uses such as essential government emergency response services, non-tribal commercial fishing, the Kitsap Transit foot ferry fleet (which may provide up to 600,000 annual trips by 2026), general moorage and recreational slips, and commercial fishing vessel moorage and cargo unloading docks reserved exclusively for the Suquamish Tribe to exercise its treaty rights.

The impacts of climate change and wave attenuation from both the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Washington State Ferry vessel traffic have put the breakwater at the risk of failure. Furthermore, a replaced breakwater will include the electrification components necessary to charge Kitsap Transit's growing electric fleet. In February of 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded Kitsap Transit \$7.7 million to add a new zero emission vessel to their fleet and the new breakwater would serve as a charging location.

I am pleased to support the Port's efforts to secure federal funding to extend the life of this unique and critical regional asset. The economic, transit, and community benefits, treaty right considerations, and the impacts of climate change make this project worthy of federal investment and partnership. As you review applications for this grant program, I urge your full and fair consideration of the Port Orchard Marina Breakwater project. Should you have any questions, please contact Emma Abraham in my Tacoma Office at (253) 272-3515 or Emma.Abraham@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress