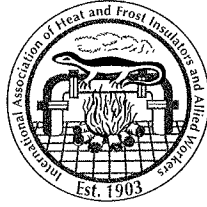


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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HEAT & FROST INSULATORS & ALLIED WORKERS LOCAL NO. 7

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JAN 15 2019

ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS
WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

January 10, 2019

Whatcom County Council
311 Grand Avenue
Suite 105
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Whatcom County Councilmembers:

As members of the labor community here in Whatcom County and leaders of statewide labor leadership, we write today concerned by the Council's ongoing effort to fundamentally and negatively alter the way many of our union brothers and sisters live, work and raise their families.

Specifically, we are talking about your misguided focus on rewriting the Whatcom County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Whatcom County Code to make it virtually impossible to expand and build critical infrastructure. Resolution 2018-015 will have a detrimental impact on all Whatcom industries - impacting our ability to maintain and build the trade and manufacturing infrastructure that creates jobs, here and across the region.

We urge you to pause and consider the broad ramifications of your actions.

We urge the Council to recognize that the current regulatory scheme in Whatcom County has served its citizens well for years by balancing safety and the environment while fostering an environment that encourages companies to grow and create jobs. Our County's elected leaders should do everything in their power to encourage, not discourage Whatcom County industries from creating the critical family wage jobs we rely upon.

We urge the Council to recognize the impact this will have on our trade-based economy and family wage jobs. Washington is an essential gateway for international commerce. Our state's deep-water ports, like those at Cherry Point, and favorable geographical positioning to Asia give



us a significant advantage in global trade. With Washington's economy almost wholly dependent on trade and where one in four jobs is directly tied to trade, it is troubling that the Council passed Resolution 2018-015 and is on a path to make a version of the fossil fuel moratorium a permanent feature. Both these ordinances have destructive implications that could ripple into many industry categories, potentially affecting thousands of families working in various jobs up-and-down the supply chain.

We urge the Council to consider the harm that will come to Cherry Point companies that are currently operating both safely and proficiently. There are currently more than 2,100 family wage jobs connected to activity at Cherry Point that have an average salary of \$114,000 per year, way above the county average. Additionally, the activity in this well-established industrial zone alone provides roughly \$200 million in annual tax revenues that fund schools, public safety and essential county services for our most vulnerable. This is on top of the millions of dollars to local charitable organizations that Cherry Point companies provide annually. We would hope that the Council would focus on policies that encourage economic growth, not create roadblocks that drive our strongest and highest paying employers out of Whatcom County.

We urge the Council to consider future ramifications how the actions and decisions of today would jeopardize future opportunities for economic prosperity. Resolution 2018-015 and its resulting changes to the Comprehensive Plan and County code will drive away current Whatcom companies and put a significant chill on possible investment by future employers.

We must think about the larger economic consequences of this action and avoid gambling with our future. This Council has a responsibility to represent the hard-working families of Whatcom County and to do what is best for future generations. Implementation of Resolution 2018-015 essentially confirms that when the children and grandchildren of Whatcom County residents join the workforce they will not have the same opportunity for good paying jobs and economic opportunity that Cherry Point currently provides. When grown children must move away to find jobs this is the beginning of the decline of any community. This will be your legacy?

The Whatcom County Council would be wise to think more broadly about the impact it could have on the people and economy of the county and the region and stop pursuing these misguided – and harmful – policies.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our opinion on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Todd Mitchell

Business Manager

Heat & Frost Insulators Local 7