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April 10, 2014

Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr.
Commandant, US Coast Guard
Headquarters
2100 2nd Street, SW
Washington, DC 20593

Admiral Papp:

As you may know, on March 7th the Oregon Department of Transportation announced it had begun shutting down all activities related to the proposed Columbia River Crossing (CRC) bridge project. The shutdown is scheduled to be completed by May 31. With Washington State rejecting the proposal in 2013, Oregon's actions will mark the end of the highly flawed and highly controversial project.

While the CRC is now dead, many unanswered questions remain; particularly surrounding the Coast Guard's permitting process. As I said in my letter dated October 24, 2013, there are serious concerns in Southwest Washington and in Congress that the Coast Guard was improperly influenced to deviate from standard procedures to issue the permit. There were a number of unprecedented steps taken throughout this process, including the removal of permitting jurisdiction from the regional office in Seattle.

In both the aforementioned letter and a letter dated September 13, 2013 I requested internal and external communications regarding the CRC. I appreciate the delivery of external documents and internal administrative records. However, seven months after the initial request I have still not received any internal communications. I do not believe that throughout the entire permitting process there were no emails sent between Coast Guard employees regarding the Columbia River Crossing. It has also been brought to my attention that the Coast Guard has not complied with private citizen requests for communications under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The Coast Guard's disregard for my constituents' concerns and private citizens' requests is both upsetting and inappropriate. I implore you to provide the public with the information that was requested, as a failure to do so would also be a failure to comply with United States law.

I would appreciate your prompt attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact Chad Ramey (chad.ramey@mail.house.gov) in my DC office with questions or for clarifications.

Sincerely,



Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress

Cc: Hon. Harold Rogers, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations
Hon. Bill Shuster, Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Hon. Duncan Hunter, Chairman, Subcommittee on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation
Hon. John Carter, Chairman, Subcommittee on Homeland Security.