

PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – November 18, 2005

Making Our Ports More Secure

A GROUNDBREAKING PORT SECURITY BILL - This week, I introduced, along with Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine), the GreenLane Maritime Cargo Security Act. This groundbreaking, bipartisan bill would greatly enhance the security of the millions of cargo containers that enter our nation's ports each year. In a Senate floor speech and in a Capital Hill Press conference, I called on my colleagues to support this important legislation.

CURRENT CARGO SYSTEM IS A MAJOR VULNERABILITY - Right now, there is a danger that terrorists could use cargo containers to attack our nation. They could use containers to smuggle weapons or terrorists into the United States, or could turn a container into a weapon by detonating a conventional, chemical, biological, or nuclear weapon within a container once it arrives on American shores. Such an attack could cost many lives and could cripple our economy.

Yet, though we know about this threat, we are not equipped at present to address it. The international cargo system was built pre-9/11, with an emphasis on efficiency but not on security. So, as a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, I wrote the bill along with Senator Collins, who is the chairman of the full Senate Homeland Security Committee.

OUR GREENLANE BILL ADDRESSES THE PROBLEM – Sen. Collins and I recognize that to protect our nation we have to develop a cargo security system that closes vulnerabilities and provides a way to resume trade after an incident, while maintaining the efficient flow of commerce. Our GreenLane bill addresses these issues, taking into account the input of all the key stakeholders and experts. Our bill will protect Americans by making our cargo and seaports more secure - mitigating a dangerous vulnerability. Specifically, it will:

- Provide layered security at every step of the supply chain while keeping it efficient.
- Push the borders out and "reduce the haystack," so we can focus our limited resources on suspect cargo.
- Prevent a lengthy shutdown of America's seaports in the event of an incident – protecting America's economy from severe disruption.

Read my floor speech and sign up to receive updates:

<http://murray.senate.gov/greenlane>

Funding WA Priorities

I'm delighted to announce that, today, the House and Senate approved the 2006 spending bill for the departments of Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development, and other federal agencies. I'm proud to have secured millions to fund transportation and infrastructure improvements throughout our state. The bill now goes to the full House and Senate for final passage and then to the President to be signed into law.

This is an especially tight budget year, but I fought hard for this funding, because I know how important it is to keep our state moving, and keep our economy growing. Below is a list of funding amounts, by region (visit the link below each item for a complete list of projects receiving funding in that region):

- PUGET SOUND: Over \$133 million for Sound Transit, busses, air traffic technology, public housing. *See:* <http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=249071>
- EASTERN WASHINGTON: \$7.8 million for freight, rail, and airport facilities. *See:* <http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=249082>

- OLYMPIC PENINSULA: \$18 million for roads, Washington Ferries, and Transit Agencies in Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, & Mason Counties. *See:* <http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=249081>
- CENTRAL WASHINGTON: \$4.5 million for Agriculture Rail Cars, Yakima Road Improvements, and Ben Franklin, Grant & Valley Transit. *See:* <http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=249077>
- NORTHWEST WASHINGTON: Over \$50 million for Blaine Border Crossing, Bellingham Waterfront, and Island, Skagit and Mount Vernon Transit. *See:* <http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=249073>
- SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON: Nearly \$5 million for Roads, Rail, and Fire Safety. *See:* <http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=249072>

Good News on Pensions

A PENSION BILL THAT HELPS, PROTECTS WORKERS - The retirement security of all American workers is critical in these uncertain economic times. As a member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), I've been working hard with my colleagues to develop legislation that will strengthen and protect our nation's pension system for the long haul. I'm proud to report that, this week, the Senate passed a bill that I believe will help do that. The pension reform bill I supported Wednesday in the Senate does right by our workers. It ensures that promised pensions will be there for our retirees in their golden years. *Details:*

<http://www.murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=248972>

Critical Funding for WA's Military Bases

UPGRADING FACILITIES – This week, I announced that I've secured over \$319 million in construction projects for Washington state military installations. I secured the funding in the House-Senate conference report on the 2006 Military Construction and VA Appropriations bill, as a key member of this subcommittee. The conference report will now go to the president to be signed into law. The installations receiving funding include:

- Air Force: **Fairchild AFB - \$8.2 million**
- Army: **Fort Lewis - over \$153 million**
- Navy: **Sub Base Bangor - nearly \$133 million**
- Navy: **Naval Station Everett - over \$50 million**

Our state's military bases are a critical part of our national defense. It's important that the bases have top-notch facilities. The funding I have secured will help greatly in our ongoing efforts to modernize and upgrade the facilities in which our men and women in uniform and their families live, work and train. *See:*

<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=249105>

Fighting for a Safer Workplace

This week, I was pleased to introduce a bill designed to better protect our workers who work with and around hazardous chemicals, the HazCom Simplification Act of 2005. I was pleased to work with HELP Committee Chairman Mike Enzi (R-Nev) on this effort. We developed this bipartisan legislation working with health and safety stakeholders from business and labor, as well as experts from around the world. Our goal is to create a globally harmonized system for the classification and labeling of chemicals that will benefit both employers and workers.

For example, as more work is done on the storage tank farms located at the Hanford waste site, workers are being exposed to new dangers from the vapors in the tanks. I look forward to working with Chairman Enzi to protect our workers from such hazards, and this bill is a strong first step in that effort.

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