

PATTY MURRAY'S WASHINGTON VIEW

U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Weekly Report to the People of Washington – May 20, 2005

Help for Our Employers & Job Seekers

WORKFORCE-STRENGTHENING BILL - On Wednesday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee unanimously passed S.1021, a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). WIA helps address the critical skills shortage facing workers and employers in Washington state.

The bill that passed on Wednesday makes progress on my priorities by:

- **Knocking down barriers** to training;
- **Increasing flexibility** at the state and local levels; and
- **Cutting red tape.**

I worked on this legislation as a senior member of the HELP Committee and as Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety. I've visited workforce boards and worked with workforce leaders throughout Washington state to craft a bill that will meet the needs of workers and employers in communities throughout Washington state.

Next, the bill comes before the full Senate for a vote. I will be working hard to see that it is passed by my Senate colleagues and signed into law.

Read my statement in support of WIA:

<http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=237811>

Supporting Our State's Wine Industry

GREAT NEWS FOR WA WINE INDUSTRY – On Monday, I applauded a Supreme Court decision allowing consumers to buy wine from out-of-state producers. This ruling paves the way for Washington wineries to make their wines available to out-of-state consumers, thereby greatly increasing sales.

Over the past decade, wine has become a \$2.9 billion industry in our state, making us the second-largest wine producer in the nation. We now have over 300 wineries – nearly double the number we had five years ago. Production has also doubled over the past decade, with wine grapes now the state's 4th largest fruit crop and the industry supporting more than 13,000 related jobs in our state. I'm proud of our state's wine industry. Our growers can continue to count on me for the support they need to keep the industry strong and growing.

Get periodic updates on my work for WA's wine industry.

<http://murray.senate.gov/wine/wineupdates.cfm>

Keeping Our State Moving

TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS - On Wednesday, the Senate passed its version of the transportation reauthorization legislation that will provide funding for the nation's highway, transit and safety programs over the next five years. The "Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act" (SAFETEA) will provide a total of \$295 billion to assist states and communities with investments in highway and transit projects. These projects will reduce congestion and improve safety on our nation's highways, and will enhance the quality of life for millions of Americans.

Overall, I'm glad my colleagues recognize the importance of investing in our transportation infrastructure. These investments create good-paying jobs today and pave the way for future economic growth. Yet, while I'm pleased that we've passed this funding, it remains well below the amount needed to make true investments in the future of our transportation system.

In fact, the Senate's version of the bill is \$11.2 billion greater than the amount proposed by President Bush and the level passed by the House of Representatives on March 10th. Hopefully the House-Senate conference committee that negotiates the final funding level, as well as the president, will realize how important this funding is to our nation's present and future.

MORE SUPPORT FOR FERRIES – The transportation bill includes an amendment I introduced, as ranking Democrat on the Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, to increase funding for our nation's ferry systems to \$56.9 million per year. Despite the growing importance of ferry travel to our state and nation, our investment in ferries pales in comparison to those for highways and other forms of mass transit. My amendment recognizes the importance of ferries to our nation's transportation infrastructure and provides the resources and support they need to grow.

FUNDING FOR SOUTH SOUND TRANSIT – This week I announced an award of \$14.7 million from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to Sound Transit's Sounder Commuter Rail between Tacoma and Lakewood. I secured the funding, which will pay for right-of-way acquisition along Sound Transit's Tacoma-to-Lakewood commuter rail segment, in the Transportation Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2003.

This grant will go a long way towards helping us relieve congestion in the South Sound region. Sounder Commuter Rail has already proven to be an important part of the South Sound's transportation network, and this additional funding gives a big boost to this very successful line.

Defending WA Aerospace Jobs

ONGOING FIGHT – For the past year, I've been fighting to maintain American leadership in the aerospace industry and keep American aerospace jobs here at home. I have a three-pronged strategy when it comes to fighting European aircraft manufacturer Airbus's unfair competition. I'm working to:

- **Stop the subsidies** that European governments give Airbus;
- **Debunk Airbus's false claims** that it creates American jobs and that it is an American company; and
- **Show that Airbus does not care about American workers or American security.**

WTO CASE AGAINST AIRBUS – On Thursday, Airbus showed its true colors in asking the E.U. to illegally subsidize its A350 – and those colors are anything but red, white and blue. Despite a slick marketing campaign, Airbus confirmed that they will go to any length to undermine American workers and our aerospace industry.

I have attempted repeatedly to get the Europeans to compete fairly. I've worked with the Bush Administration to encourage negotiation that would level the playing field. But Airbus and the E.U. mocked our efforts by continuing to work behind the scenes to secure illegal subsidies. The issue of launch aid is at the heart of negotiations, and we are not backing down. We have told the Europeans that if they do not play fair, we'll file a formal trade case with the World Trade Organization, seeking to have the subsidies declared illegal under world trade rules. Unfortunately, the time has come to do just that.

Their actions show that the EU and Airbus are not serious about resolving this issue through negotiations. We are committed to saving American aerospace jobs, and we should not lose more time with an insincere partner. I'll continue to work with the administration to protect American workers from unfair tactics.

Learn more about my work to save our aerospace jobs:

<http://www.murray.senate.gov/aerospace>

Get periodic updates on my work to save our aerospace jobs:

<http://murray.senate.gov/aeroupdates/index.cfm>

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