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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8007

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State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Shin, Conway, Harper, Nelson, Kline, Becker, Hobbs, King, Eide, McAuliffe, Bailey, Hasegawa, Honeyford, Chase, and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 02/08/13. Referred to Committee on Trade & Economic Development.

1 TO THE HONORABLE BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND  
2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
7 represent and petition as follows:

8 WHEREAS, The federal harbor maintenance tax is not collected when  
9 cargo travels to Canadian ports and is then shipped to the United  
10 States via rail or roads; and

11 WHEREAS, This noncollection of the harbor maintenance tax is an  
12 incentive to divert cargo away from United States ports; and

13 WHEREAS, The federal maritime commission inquiry into the harbor  
14 maintenance tax found that up to half of United States bound containers  
15 coming into Canada's west coast ports could revert to using United  
16 States west coast ports if a fee equivalent to the harbor maintenance  
17 tax was imposed at the border on United States bound containers; and

18 WHEREAS, Current United States law does not require the revenues  
19 raised through the harbor maintenance tax to be fully spent on harbor  
20 maintenance related investments; and

1           WHEREAS, The geography of harbor maintenance tax expenditures does  
2 not correlate with the states where harbor maintenance revenues are  
3 generated; and

4           WHEREAS, The balance of the harbor maintenance trust fund has grown  
5 to over seven billion dollars;

6           NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that:

7           (1) Congress pass and the president sign legislation imposing a fee  
8 equivalent to the harbor maintenance tax on United States bound cargo  
9 when it crosses the Canadian border; and

10          (2) Such cargo fees and harbor maintenance tax proceeds be made  
11 available for freight mobility infrastructure improvements.

12          BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
13 transmitted to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United  
14 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the  
15 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of  
16 Washington.

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