

RESOLUTION NO. 3272

A RESOLUTION of the Port Commission of the Port of Seattle Opposing Initiative 695 because of potential significant negative impacts on the Port's ability to conduct international trade, improve the flow of people and goods, and efficiently operate its facilities for the public benefit.

WHEREAS, Initiative 695 in its title states "Shall voter approval be required for any tax increase, license tab fees be \$30 per vehicle, and existing vehicle taxes be repealed?"; and

WHEREAS, Initiative 695 will be the subject of a state-wide public vote on November 2, 1999; and

WHEREAS, RCW 42.17.130 (1) specifically permits an elective legislative body to express opposition to a ballot proposition at a public meeting so long as certain notice requirements are met and an opportunity for expression of an opposing view is afforded to members of the public; and

WHEREAS, The Commission afforded an opportunity for members of the public to speak in support of Initiative 695 at its September 28, 1999 public meeting and the notice for that meeting includes the title and number of Initiative 695 and otherwise meet the requirements of RCW 42.17.130(1); and

WHEREAS, The Commissioners have had an opportunity to study the implications of Initiative 695 and its potential impact on future Port of Seattle operations and revenues, and upon regional transportation initiatives, programs and planning which will affect freight mobility in King County and throughout the Pacific Northwest;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Port Commission of the Port of Seattle that:

Section 1. The Port Commission opposes Initiative 695 because it would significantly curtail state transportation initiatives that keep the Port competitive and because it could severely limit the Port's ability to raise funds for infrastructure investments essential to efficient movement of people and goods throughout this region.

Section 2. Initiative 695, if passed, will reduce motor vehicle excise tax by about \$1.2 billion in this biennium and by about \$1.8 billion in years 2001-03. As a result, the Washington State Department of Transportation ("WSDOT") would be forced to cut billions of dollars worth of transportation improvements, road maintenance and congestion relief measure, including mass transit service. This would lead to more congestion and threaten the free flow of exports and imports through Port of Seattle facilities, nearby intermodal rail facilities, and markets in the Northwest served by truck traffic.

Section 3. Initiative 695 would eliminate income from the motor vehicle excise tax that was dedicated to raise bonds under Referendum 49, approved by Washington State voters last November to fund major transportation improvements. Those improvements include the FAST Corridor, a freight mobility initiative that will separate rail from truck traffic in the Puget Sound area. The FAST Corridor is essential for the flow of goods in and out of Seattle's harbor and for preserving the Port's global competitiveness.

Section 4. Completion of State Route 509 is another project of major Port and community interest that would be crippled by passage of Initiative 695. This project would provide a better connection for freight traffic between Interstate 5 and the Duwamish industrial area and substantially improve traffic flow in the Sea Tac, Burien and Des Moines areas. The

Port of Seattle intends to construct a new south access route from SR 509 into Seattle-Tacoma International Airport for more efficient movement of passengers and cargo. Funds for environmental review, design and engineering work for SR 509 are to be raised by through Referendum 49 bond sales, which will not happen if Initiative 695 passes.

Section 5. If Initiative 695 passes, WSDOT may not be able to fund about \$60 million in rail improvements in a partnership with Sound Transit and Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad. This project is to upgrade the line between Seattle and Tacoma for commuter rail. The elimination of this funding could exacerbate existing conflicts between freight and passenger rail movements in this corridor.

Section 6. Initiative 695's restrictions on the Port's statutory taxing authority would impair the Port's ability to make investments in transportation systems and to act as a catalyst for economic development. The Initiative's restrictions would result in lower credit ratings for Port debt and higher costs for borrowing funds.

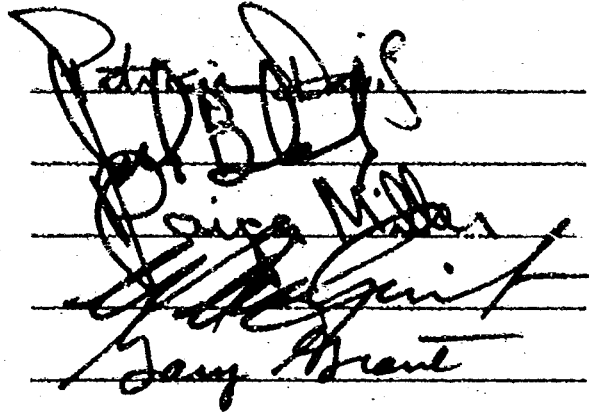
Section 7. Initiative 695 could limit the Port's ability to charge appropriate fees and tariffs for a wide range of services, including vessel moorage, crane rentals, automobile parking, shipment of containerized cargo and other goods through our harbor, aircraft parking and fueling and utilities. More than a third of the Port's operating revenues come from such sources. Subjecting these service fees to a public vote would jeopardize a major source of income raised by the Port on behalf of the public. Constraints on the Port's ability to impose appropriate fees and charges also could hamper the Port's ability to finance investment in new facilities through revenue bonds.

Section 8. In addition to failing to distinguish between taxes and user fees, Initiative 695 fails to provide for reasonably anticipated general inflation in the costs of maintaining

existing facilities and services. If passed, Initiative 695 could seriously impact the Port's ability to adequately maintain and operate many of its facilities in a business-like manner.

Section 9. The Commission directs the Port Executive Director and Port staff to distribute copies of this Resolution to interested members of the public, media and Washington State Legislature.

ADOPTED by the Port Commission of the Port of Seattle at a regular meeting held this 12th day of October, 19 99, and duly authenticated in open session by the signatures of the Commissioners voting in favor thereof and the seal of the Commission.



The image shows four handwritten signatures in black ink, each written over a horizontal line. From top to bottom, the signatures appear to be: 1. A large, stylized signature that is difficult to decipher. 2. A signature that appears to be "Suzanne Miller". 3. A signature that appears to be "John J. ...". 4. A signature that appears to be "Gary ...".

Port Commission