

Policy Working Group

MEETING SUMMARY

JUNE 2, 2025; 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

VIA ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE

Meeting Objectives:

- Brief Federal Policy Update
- Recap State Legislative Session

Meeting Summary:

- I. Welcome: Facilitator Andrés Mantilla, Uncommon Grounds, opened the meeting and covered meeting ground rules.
- II. Federal Update, Eric Schinfeld, POS
 - The federal focus has been on the major budget “reconciliation” bill and early discussions about FY 2026 appropriations. Here are three key updates:
 - **FAA Leadership and Air Traffic Control:** The President nominated a new FAA Administrator, but the nomination hasn’t been approved by the U.S. Senate yet. The FAA continues to operate without a permanent leader, with the U.S. Secretary of Transportation stepping in more actively. Ongoing concerns about air traffic control including staffing shortages, outdated tech, and safety incidents have likely kept FAA funding stable despite broader federal cuts. There’s \$12.5 billion on the table for modernizing air traffic systems and facilities in the reconciliation legislation.
 - **FY 2026 Budget and FAA Priorities**
The President’s FY 2026 budget proposal keeps FAA funding mostly flat. While that’s good news, it’s been tough to make progress on policy priorities and changes we’d like to see implemented, especially in these uncertain early months. We’re continuing to push for attention on implementation of the FAA Reauthorization Act.
 - **FAA Administrator Nominee**
The nominee, Bryan Bedford, the current head of Republic Airways and a trained pilot, is well-qualified. His confirmation is expected to go through the Senate Commerce Committee but the timing of a full Senate confirmation is not clear.
- III. State Legislative Session Recap, John Flanagan, Port of Seattle
 - There was a setback with the Noise Repair and Replacement Program. Although \$1 million was included in the 2024 enacted budget with legislative intent for the funds to go toward actual home repairs, not just surveys or studies, the funding won’t move forward this year.

Due to the shortfall in the state budget, the \$1 million was swept back into the General Fund. We attempted to secure an expedited grant agreement in advance, but Commerce ultimately declined the request.

- *Question: One working group member heard from a few advocates who thought the Port had told the state it couldn't spend the \$1 million in time and that the state could take the funds back.* *Response:* The program is progressing, and the Port of Seattle is actively spending down the original \$6.5 million allocation. Several million dollars remain, and the Noise Program team has a clear plan to use the funds strategically on eligible home repairs in the future. Surveys are ongoing, including outreach to pre-1993 homes and sound testing is scheduled for this summer. Importantly, pre-1993 homes are eligible for federal funding as well.
- *Question: Should we push for the \$1M in the Supplemental Budget?* Yes. There's a strong case to advocate for the \$1 million in the supplemental budget. More funding would support continued progress on repairs and expand reach to more eligible homes.
- *Comment: there are 3,000 houses with failed packages. Maybe legislation is what we need to do if we continue to fail to find eligible homes?*
- Recap of our state legislative priorities:
 - Noise repair and replace
 1. Reduction of \$1M in State noise repair and replace grant funding – swept into the general fund
 2. Retained ~\$60k for program operating expenses at Department of Commerce
 3. Overall, we are set up to continue this advocacy in future years when the budget is not so tight
- Airport siting
 - CAWG's last meeting occurred on 5/22 at Paine Field.
 - Since drafting our 2025 State Legislative Agenda, Paine Field has spoken publicly about expanding their commercial service offerings
 - Only solves a small portion of the problem, but still a very positive step
 - \$1.7M dedicated to operations of the Commercial Aviation Work Group (CAWG)
 - Proviso includes language that was vetoed several years ago; language directs the work group to:
 1. Exclude consideration of sites in King County and existing military bases (JBLM)
 2. Re-consider 'green field' development
 3. Disqualify certain areas based on environmental justice considerations, impacts to overburdened communities*, etc.
 4. Engage with certain vulnerable populations in a material way
 5. For 2026, StART members should think about what other types of work we should encourage the CAWG to take up. As an example, we're spoken to WSDOT Aviation about the following:

- Produce a study / report for the legislature regarding commercial airports in other states that share facilities with the military
 - Study / recommend 'incentives' for near-airport communities to help offset some of the challenges associated with nearby commercial aviation operations
 - Property tax
 - Priority for infrastructure funding
- At our next meeting in August, we will begin refining the state legislative agenda for the upcoming session; explore opportunities to deepen engagement with the CAWG - consider inviting Anne Richart to return for a discussion. Continue reciprocal conversations with WSDOT Aviation. Also explore the possibility of having one or two CAWG members participate in a full StART meeting to strengthen coordination and visibility.
- Air quality
 - We mainly advocated for continued and ongoing air quality resources
 - Highlights include:
 1. UW Air Quality Program - \$400k operating
 2. Indoor Air Quality in K12 Schools - \$17.5M new capital resources and \$45M in re-appropriations
 3. Air quality in overburdened communities - \$21.5M in new capital spending, \$2.5M in new operating funds, and \$2.5M re-appropriation
 4. Near-airport air quality - \$1.3M operating – mainly Department of Ecology programming
 5. South King Air Quality Equipment - \$6M operating, but allocated towards direct benefit to individual homeowners
- Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)
 - WSU / Paine Field SAF Center - ~\$17M total
 - WSDOT Aviation SAF infrastructure – directive to produce project list for funding in 2026
 - Programs benefitting SAF, but not exclusively:
 1. \$10M clean energy grants
 2. \$24M green jobs and infrastructure
 - \$50M 'hard to decarbonize' grants
- Decarbonizing ground transportation
 - Without naming anything specific, lots of success stories that we can tell here.

IV. Federal Legislative Agenda, 2025/26, Eric Schinfeld, POS

- Like the state agenda, we need to update our federal priorities following the passage of the FAA reauthorization. Eric will bring forward the three remaining priorities to focus on:
 - **Ensure Implementation:** Monitor and advocate to ensure that key provisions in the FAA reauthorization are properly implemented.

- **Funding for Repair and Replacement:** Continue lobbying for federal investment in critical infrastructure repair and replacement.
- **Identify Additional Opportunities:** Assess what else can be advanced given the current federal landscape.
- **Future DC engagement:** After the success of our first DC fly-in in April 2023, where we met with our congressional delegation, other key members, and the FAA; it would be valuable to plan a return visit, either this fall or in spring 2026, depending on how developments in Congress unfold over the next few months. While fall is a possibility, spring (April or May) may offer a calmer political environment and better timing for effective engagement.

V. Wrap Up/Next Steps

- Next meeting is August 4, 2025, 5-6 pm.
- John will provide a draft update to the State Legislative agenda – ***please send any suggestions you have for the agenda to John***
- Eric will provide a draft update for the Federal Legislative agenda – ***please send any suggestions you have for the agenda to Eric***

MEMBER	INTEREST REPRESENTED	PRESENT
ADOLFO BAILON	BURIEN	-
AMY ARRINGTON	NORMANDY PARK	✓
ANTHONY HEMSTAD	DES MOINES	✓
ARIF GHOUSE	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
BILL VADINO	FEDERAL WAY	✓
BRANDON MILES	TUKWILA	-
GARMON NEWSOM II	BURIEN	-
JASON WOYCKE	DES MOINES	-
JEFF HARBAUGH	BURIEN	✓
JOE DUSENBURY	DES MOINES	-
MIKE BRUGATO	FEDERAL WAY	✓
MOIRA BRADSHAW	NORMANDY PART	✓
REBECCA DEMING	DES MOINES	-
ROGER KADEG	SEATAC	-
NON-MEMBER		
CHIRAG VEDULLAPALLI	OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN ADAM SMITH	-
JOSIE MCKINLEY	OFFICE OF SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL	-
MARIELLE TRUMBAUER	OFFICE OF CONGRESSWOMAN JAYAPAL	-
MEGAN UTEMEI	OFFICE OF SEN. PATTY MURRAY	-
RESOURCES	TITLE	
CLARE GALLAGHER	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
DAVE KAPLAN	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓

ERIC SCHINFELD	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
JOHN FLANNAGAN	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
MARCO MILANESE	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
NATE CAMINOS	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
PARIS EDWARDS	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
RYAN MCMILLAN	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
SARAH COX	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
CONSULTANT		
ANDRES MANTILLA	UNCOMMON BRIDGES	✓
CHERYL SWAB	UNCOMMON BRIDGES	✓

NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 6, 2025, 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

LOCATION: ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE

*(11) "Overburdened community" means a geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts, and includes, but is not limited to, highly impacted communities as defined in RCW [19.405.020](#).

(22) "Highly impacted community" means a community designated by the department of health based on cumulative impact analyses in RCW [19.405.140](#) or a community located in census tracts that are fully or partially on "Indian country" as defined in 18 U.S.C. Sec. 1151.