



**Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure**  
**U.S. House of Representatives**

**Will Shuster**  
Chairman

Washington, DC 20515

**Nick J. Rahall, III**  
Ranking Member

Christopher P. Bertram, Staff Director

James H. Zoia, Democrat Staff Director

May 7, 2013

Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr.  
Commandant, United States Coast Guard  
U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters  
2100 Second Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20593

Dear Admiral Papp:

It has recently been brought to my attention that the Coast Guard is currently evaluating a permit application for the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project. I have been contacted by businesses, residents, and river users along the Columbia River with serious concerns regarding the proposed CRC project and the impact it may have on river traffic. It is my understanding that, if built, the height restrictions imposed by this bridge could have negative impacts on multiple businesses in the area that represent more than 1,300 jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars to the local economy.

On a bigger scale, the Columbia River is the third largest river system in America. It serves 30 ports on the federally authorized navigation channel across three states. It is responsible for roughly 40 million tons of international trade and \$20 billion in cargo value each year. The free flow of trade on the Columbia River is vital to future economic development in the region, and currently 40,000 jobs in the Northwest depend on it.

I respectfully request the following information:

- A summary and timeline of the permitting process for this project to date;
- A detailed account of the criteria being used by the Coast Guard to determine bridge height standards with respect to river usage; and
- A timeline for the permit process moving forward and when to expect a final decision.

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Commandant  
Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr.

As you know, the Bridge Act of 1906 states that no bridge shall at any time unreasonably obstruct the free navigation of any navigable waters of the United States. I ask that you uphold the guidelines that were meant to protect, and not restrict, commerce on our nation's navigable waterways. Thank you for your attention to this request, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Duncan Hunter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D".

Duncan Hunter  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Coast Guard  
and Maritime Transportation