



International Union of Operating Engineers

LOCAL 302 • Washington and Alaska • AFL-CIO

Daren Konopaski, *Business Manager and General Vice President*

Corey Baxter, *District 8 Representative*

February 5, 2015

House Transportation Committee
Alaska State House
State Capitol Rm, 17
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Knik Arm Crossing

To whom it may concern:

The International Union of Operating Engineers Local 302 is in full support of the Knik Arm Crossing project and would like to see it move forward into the construction phase.

The Knik Arm Bridge is a regional connectivity project that will provide a critical infrastructure link between communities, as well as a much-needed freight and service connection between Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Interior Alaska.

The Knik Arm Crossing will have a significant long-term impact on Alaska's largest city, Anchorage, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, which is one of the fastest growing communities in the U.S. The project will also provide benefit to the south-central and interior regions of Alaska by providing a more direct route for freight moving north of Anchorage. The Port of Anchorage receives over 80% of the incoming freight for the state and a significant amount of that freight is then trucked north to cities and towns for use or further distribution to more remote areas of the state. Overall, 65 percent of the state's population will directly or indirectly benefit from the proposed bridge.

The bridge will also serve as an important alternate transportation link between Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Valley. In addition, it is important to note that providing an alternative safety corridor for Alaska's largest city makes sound sustainable economic sense. It will reduce commuting time for residents and open access to undeveloped land needed for both industrial and residential expansion.

The undeveloped area that will be directly accessed by the bridge and its approach road will expand the single-family housing options that are presently constrained by a lack of residential building lots in the Anchorage Bowl. Industrial land needs will also be served by the bridge and will allow for the growth and expansion of industry while still affording ready access to the port, airport, and business centers in Anchorage.

The Knik Arm Crossing would provide a much-needed economic boost to Alaska, create thousands of jobs, improve access to natural resource development and provide regional transportation connectivity between our communities and ports.

I would like to thank the Transportation Committee for their time and effort with this project and hope to see it move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Corey Baxter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Corey Baxter

District 8 Representative, Operating Engineers Local 302