

FAITH ACTION NETWORK

A Partnership for the Common Good

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Testimony at Port Commission Meeting

January 24, 2012

Alice Woldt, Faith Action Network

My name is Alice Woldt. I am co-director of Faith Action Network (FAN), formerly Washington Association of Churches and Lutheran Public Policy Office. FAN is a faith-inspired statewide partnership of faith communities striving for a just, compassionate, and sustainable world.

The selection of Mark Hutcheson as your outside counsel regarding the SeaTac concessions program raises major concerns for us. We join with others in calling on you commissioners to rescind your selection of Mr. Hutcheson and replace him with a true independent counsel who has the demonstrated capacity to work with all stakeholders.

Faith Action Network supports your decision to evaluate the Master Concession Agreement. This evaluation should consider the interests of all stakeholders, including workers. It should be done, as you note, with "independent legal analysis."

Mr. Hutcheson's experience is anything but independent and unbiased.

Mr. Hutcheson has a history of anti-worker, anti-union advocacy. Recently, one of our labor partners spent several years fighting against Mr. Hutcheson's efforts to weaken and decertify a union at a major public hospital. He was unsuccessful, but his efforts cost untold thousands of precious public dollars. We are all proud that today our port generates nearly 200,000 jobs. We need those jobs to be good jobs that support families.

As the state cuts the safety net, our congregations are challenged to feed more families and house more homeless. Many of whom are working – in poverty wage, non-union jobs. The faith community recognizes that for many, a union job provides workers with a living wage and dignity in the workplace that we all deserve.

The current jobs in the master concession agreement provide decent pay, health benefits and rights for workers. They do so because workers have collective bargaining. If you break up collective bargaining, these jobs are at risk of being replaced with poverty wage employment. Your hiring of Mr. Hutcheson signals intent to go in that direction. It reflects the efforts that the Occupy movement is speaking out against - to corporatize and privatize our public domain and decision making to advantage the few and to reduce workers to serfs. It does not live up to the Port's own standards or its populist history.

FAN believes that is the wrong direction for our port, and for our communities. We call on you to withdraw your decision, and to find counsel who is able to work with all stakeholders.

Thank you.

Exhibit	<u>B</u>
Port Commission	<u>Regular</u>
Meeting of	<u>January 24, 2012</u>