

**PORT OF SEATTLE**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**COMMISSION AGENDA**

**Item No.**

5a

**ACTION ITEM**

**Date of Meeting**

October 23, 2012

**DATE:** October 11, 2012

**TO:** Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

**FROM:** Patricia Akiyama, Director, Public Affairs  
Beth Osborne, Manager, Federal Government Relations

**SUBJECT:** Federal Government Advocacy contract

**Amount of This Request:** \$0

**Source of Funds:** Operating budget

**Est. Total Contract Cost:** \$720,000

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

Request Commission authorization for the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract for federal government relations advocacy services for monitoring of federal legislation and regulatory activity, and acting on behalf of the Port at the Port's direction. The proposed contract term is a one-year contract with two, one-year options for an estimated total cost of \$720,000.

**SYNOPSIS:**

The Port of Seattle currently retains a federal government relations advocacy firm in Washington, D.C., to assist the full-time Port manager in addressing the significant number of federal actions that have a direct impact on the Port's organization and business operations. This firm acts as an advocate providing regular and consistent personal contact with the Pacific Northwest Congressional delegations, both members and staff, as well as regulatory agencies directly affecting Port operations. This memorandum requests authority to execute a contract with a federal government relations advocacy consultant to monitor legislative and regulatory activity in Washington, D.C., and to provide strategic guidance on federal policy and regulatory issues. The current contract for such services was competitively bid in 2008 and expires January 7, 2013. There will be a robust competitive process for future federal advocacy services under the term of this contract.

**PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK AND SCHEDULE:**

The proposed scope of work is to assist Port staff to support the Port of Seattle in federal government relations activities in Washington, D.C., by monitoring federal legislation and regulatory activity and acting on behalf of the Port at the Port's direction. This work will promote and protect the Port's interest in federal matters. More specific duties will be to represent the Port at federal legislative and executive branch agency meetings in Washington, D.C.; serve as the Port's liaison with the Administration, Members of Congress, other federal agencies and relevant industry associations; and to provide strategic guidance related to federal policy and regulatory issues. The consultant will provide regular reports on its activities in Washington, D.C., on behalf of the Port, both orally and in writing. It

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will conduct other work as assigned, including but not limited to, introductory meetings for Port officials and staff; creating strategies to advance Port issues before Congress and the Executive Branch; attending Congressional hearings, markups and briefings on matters of interest to the Port; drafting correspondence to federal entities and Members of Congress; writing draft testimony and legislation; drafting comments for the federal regulatory process; providing federal briefing materials as requested; and interacting regularly with the Pacific Northwest Congressional delegations, committee staffs and federal regulatory bodies. Public Affairs will work with Office of Social Responsibility to determine small business opportunities.

Over the past year, two examples of our continued work at the federal level advocating for our Seaport's and Airport's competitiveness include the release of a Federal Maritime Commission report on the impact of price on cargo diversion from West Coast ports and the opportunity to advocate for a daily flight between Haneda (Tokyo) and Sea-Tac with the U.S. Department of Transportation. Possible federal issues with implications for the Port that may surface over the period of the contract include reauthorization of the Water Resources Development Act, reauthorization of the surface transportation bill, beginning stages of reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration bill, annual appropriations legislation, baggage screening reforms, Harbor Maintenance Tax reforms, and regulations to implement a national freight strategy and infrastructure improvements. Airport and Seaport security and infrastructure issues, as well as a variety of emissions and other environmental issues, will remain areas of federal activity.

This contract will be procured competitively and according to Port procedures. Public Affairs will work with the Office of Social Responsibility to determine small business opportunities. To increase competition, we will advertise the Request for Proposal broadly. Many qualified firms provide these types of services, and we are likely to receive a high number of applications.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The estimated cost of the agreement is \$720,000 for three years. Services are estimated at \$240,000 per year. Charges to this contract will be from the Public Affairs department and will be included in annual budgets. Consequently, there is no funding request associated with this authorization.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS:**

**Alternative 1:** Do not hire a D.C.-based advocate. Although Port staff are well-versed in most federal issues and are able to effectively direct the work of the contractor, they do not always have the specific knowledge necessary to represent the Port on an issue or do not have available capacity to perform the amount of work required for effective representation in Congress and the executive branch. Past experience shows the Port typically has had to hire specialized and highly skilled consultants resident in Washington, D.C., to perform this work most effectively. This is not the preferred alternative.

**Alternative 2:** Through a broadly advertised competitive process, hire a consultant to perform specialized and highly skilled advocacy services. Maintaining a regular presence in Washington, D.C., with a consultant firm assists the Port not only in monitoring ongoing activity, but also in identifying opportunities such as funding for Port initiatives, and influencing the development of legislation and regulations. As both federal and state funding is affected by a downturn in revenues, it will be of

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increasing strategic benefit to have an informed, regular presence in Washington, D.C., to advocate for Port interests and to uniquely represent our needs in transportation funding, environmental regulation, trade regulation, maritime and aviation industry issues, and Port security. These advocacy efforts are essential to support of our mission to create jobs, stimulate economic development, promote industrial growth and advance trade and commerce in King County, the Puget Sound region and Washington state. **This is the preferred alternative.**

**OTHER DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REQUEST:**

- None.

**PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS:**

- None.