

## Testimony of Ralph B. Ibarra, President – DiverseAmerica Network

### Port of Seattle Commission Meeting: April 1, 2020

For the record, my name is Ralph B. Ibarra residing in Algona, WA since 1990 and the Commissioners and Port Staff know me as an advocate and activist for inclusion, diversity, equity and access in public works contracts for small business concerns; especially for enterprises owned and operated by minorities, women, veterans, the disabled, and those that identify themselves as LGBT. At the last Commission meeting held on March 24, the positive results from the Port's Diversity in Contracting commitment were shared with the Commissioners by Mian Rice, Director Diversity in Contracting. To be sure, Mian is the best person to manage the Port's Diversity in Contracting endeavor and he is implementing its purpose and intent in a comprehensive and genuine manner. I also must express my gratitude for the superb actions and supportive contributions from the Port's Executives and staff members to actualize the Diversity in Contracting outcomes. As such, I offer up these two (2) critical situations to the Commission for their deliberation and subsequent actions.

A.) The disruption of Port of Seattle operations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered delays and suspensions of work on Port capital projects. These temporary actions are having a significant impact on the small and diverse firms that are subcontractors, suppliers and vendors on Port projects. As such, I am urging the Commission to direct all Port personnel and Prime contractors managing procurements and contracts for all Port projects to prepare Impact Reports and Mitigation Procedures to lessen the shock of these unavoidable delays and suspensions. These types of proactive efforts by the Port, its Prime contractors and Large subcontractors will underscore the Commission's steadfast pledge to enhance the many initiatives it has in play that propagate diversity, equity, inclusion and fairness.

B.) The provisions of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) signed into law last Friday, March 27 holds great promise for powerful and effective solutions to the plight of the small and diverse business concerns that depend on the Port for their well-being. I have been studying the CARES Act to learn as much about its purpose and intent and as a way to distill the many provisions that pertain to small firms so that I can provide support to the different constituents I am committed to help. I am particularly gratified to know that the Port of Seattle and its customers and clients have been included in a significant provision contained in the CARES Act:

#### **SEC. 3102. EMERGENCY RELIEF THROUGH LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, to provide liquidity to eligible businesses related to losses incurred as a direct result of coronavirus, the Secretary is authorized to make or guarantee loans to eligible businesses that do not, in the aggregate, exceed \$208,000,000,000 and provide the subsidy amounts necessary for such loans and loan guarantees in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

(b) DISTRIBUTION OF LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES.—Loans and loan guarantees made pursuant to subsection (a) shall be made available to eligible business as follows:

**(1) Not more than \$50,000,000,000 shall be available for passenger air carriers. [Emphasis added]**

**(2) Not more than \$8,000,000,000 shall be available for cargo air carriers. [Emphasis added]**

**(3) Not more than \$150,000,000,000 shall be available for other eligible businesses. [Emphasis added]**

As such, I am respectfully requesting that the Commission advance a priority to support the awareness, understanding and application of the CARES Act - **A BILL: To provide emergency assistance and health care response for individuals, families, and businesses affected by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic.** With the Port's ardent commitment and actions to bolster the utilization of the valuable provisions contained in the CARES Act, diverse business concerns and residents within its jurisdiction will survive and ultimately thrive in the long term. Please know that I stand ready to assist the Port of Seattle Commissioners, Executives and staff in this crucial endeavor to mitigate the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,

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