



Agenda Item: 4a
Meeting Date: May 23, 2023

PROCLAMATION OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the Port of Seattle, established in 1911 by the voters of King County, has a mission of promoting economic development and quality of life in the region through trade, commerce, and job creation in an equitable, accountable, and environmentally responsible manner; and

WHEREAS, the Port of Seattle envisions a vibrant region through job creation, partnering with our neighboring communities, and promoting social responsibility as foundational to fulfilling our mission as a public agency; and

WHEREAS, the Port supports access to quality jobs for every worker who works in Port operations. A quality job with a living wage and adequate healthcare coverage for workers is essential to the Port's success; and

WHEREAS, the Port provides all Port employees, temporary and permanent, with robust health care options; and

WHEREAS, the Port funds the SEA Employment Center operated by the nonprofit Port Jobs with the purpose of assisting SEA employers connect with qualified jobseekers from the diverse near airport communities; and

WHEREAS, essential workers at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) are a majority Black, brown, multi-racial, and immigrant workforce. They fill important jobs for airport operations including work as cleaners, wheelchair agents, baggage handlers, concessionaires, and security personnel; and

WHEREAS, essential workers were vital during the COVID-19 pandemic to keeping Port operations running smoothly. Facing the extraordinary challenges of COVID-19, service workers at SEA enabled the critical delivery of essential goods and services and yet many experienced financial barriers to accessing healthcare to keep themselves and their families healthy and safe; and

WHEREAS, essential workforce remains the backbone of SEA operations, often in physically demanding jobs, and continue to serve as a front-line workforce during this newest and uncertain phase of post-pandemic COVID-19 with increasingly busy travel at SEA; and

WHEREAS, a sample of essential workers were surveyed by labor representatives and one-third report relying on Medicaid to meet their healthcare needs, while one-third forego healthcare coverage all together due to inadequate and/or expensive coverage that does not work for them and their families; and

WHEREAS, a 2014 Port of Seattle study on quality jobs comparing SEA and airports in Oakland, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and St. Louis found that airport employers who offer competitive wage and benefits cited positive impacts through reduced employee turnover, reduced employee absenteeism, fewer disciplinary problems, and higher morale; and

WHEREAS, the Port of Seattle recognizes that meaningful access to healthcare insurance is an important recruitment tool to attract and retain a skilled workforce needed for a safe and secure airport environment. The Port of Seattle and SEA tenants are successful because of our dedicated workforce ensuring robust commercial activity and operations at our world-class and award-winning airport.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Port of Seattle Commission hereby proclaims support for every SEA worker to have access to a quality job that includes meaningful access to healthcare insurance and urges employers at the airport to offer healthcare coverage that meets the needs of the workforce at SEA.

Proclaimed by the Port of Seattle Commission this 23rd day of May, 2023

Port of Seattle Commission

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