July 12th, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Suzan DelBene, U.S. Representative, 1st District
The Honorable Rick Larsen, U.S. Representative, 2nd District
The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler, U.S. Representative, 3rd District
The Honorable Dan Newhouse, U.S. Representative, 4th District
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Representative, 5th District
The Honorable Derek Kilmer, U.S. Representative, 6th District
The Honorable Pramila Jayapal, U.S. Representative, 7th District
The Honorable Dr. Kim Schrier, U.S. Representative, 8th District
The Honorable Adam Smith, U.S. Representative, 9th District
The Honorable Marilyn Strickland, U.S. Representative, 10th District

Dear Members of Washington’s federal delegation:

As local elected officials, we take the climate crisis very seriously as we recognize the impacts it is already having on our communities. We have passed local ordinances and resolutions in support of clean electricity, clean fuels, and clean buildings. We have also used our voices to support progress at the state level on behalf of our communities. Our state government has responded by passing new laws and committing billions in new investments to transition away from fossil fuels. These infrastructure investments—in mass transit, vehicle and ferry electrification, clean buildings, and more—are not only needed to reduce pollution, but they also will create good, green jobs in our communities. Policies passed in Washington State and supported by local jurisdictions, such as the Clean Energy Transformation Act (100% clean electricity standard), serve as a model for federal action.

However, Washington cities, counties, and our state government cannot combat the climate crisis alone and so we are reaching out to you, our congressional delegation. Federal action on climate commensurate with our Paris Climate Accord obligations is critical. For us, the climate crisis is not a distant threat; it is already harming our communities. We are already suffering from climate impacts: extreme and historic heat waves, drought, and deadly wildfires. We need strong federal partnership and action to prevent an acceleration of these harms and protect our communities on behalf of those who elected and placed their trust in us.

We’re tracking the progress of the federal infrastructure package closely and with increasing alarm as it appears that climate-related investments may not be a part of a final agreement. In our view, such a decision is unacceptable. Not including significant climate investments in the federal infrastructure passage will not only gravely hinder our ability to meet our Paris Climate Accord obligations, but it means our communities will see fewer green job opportunities and will further bear the brunt of pollution.

A failure to address climate change in this federal infrastructure investment bill would be an environmental, economic, and public health disaster with real ramifications for our communities. We ask you to clearly express the urgency of climate investments—no climate, no deal.
Our community members know that robust climate policy, including climate-focused infrastructure investments, strengthens our local economies, creates good jobs, protects our health, and moves us toward environmental justice. Voters placed their trust in us – and in you – to work for a transition to a clean energy economy. When Washingtonians asked their local and state elected officials to rise to the occasion and enact model climate policy, we did. We ask that Congress now join us and do the same because our climate and the health and prosperity of our communities is on the line.

Sincerely,

County Executive Dow Constantine            County Executive Pro Tem Marty Campbell  
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Commissioner Peter Steinbrueck               Commission President Michael Shepard  
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