

Whatcom County Council  
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 105  
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Members of the Whatcom County Council,

As a longtime resident and member of the business community in Whatcom County I believe it is imperative that we are working with our elected leaders to implement policies that help businesses maintain and create jobs as we recover economically from the COVID 19 crisis. The first part of that effort is to not make things worse.

I am writing you today to ask that the Council not pass a ninth Cherry Point moratorium and to proceed with great caution as you consider your proposed changes for Cherry Point regulations.

The moratorium has gone on far to long. Please let it expire. Regarding the proposed Cherry Point amendments, I am encouraged by the work done by the Planning Commission. We should all focus our efforts on bringing the proposed Cherry Point amendments to a resolution that is positive for all that live and work in Whatcom County.

Cherry Point companies directly and indirectly support the employment of thousands of people. Those companies also contribute millions of dollars in tax revenue that directly benefits our community. This amounts to more than \$200 million in state and local taxes to fund schools, road maintenance, public safety, and countless other public services throughout our county – and now we need those jobs and tax revenue more than ever.

The Whatcom County Council must make it a priority to work with employers to implement regulations that aid in restoring the jobs we have lost due to COVID 19.

Instead of creating policies that potentially target specific industries, you should be looking for ways to facilitate job growth and protect the livelihoods of thousands of your constituents. Regulatory certainty is a vital component for attracting investment to our region. However, your proposed changes would only exacerbate the climate of regulatory uncertainty in Whatcom County that has arisen from passing eight consecutive moratoriums and spending years trying to reregulate Cherry Point.

The review by the Planning Commission has resulted in some positive recommendations to the County Council's proposed Cherry Point amendments. The Council should allow the Planning Commission to complete its review and see if the Planning Commission recommendations can make changes to the proposed Cherry Point amendments that we can all support.

Given the economic challenges we currently face, the County Council should abandon the Cherry Point moratorium and involve the appropriate stakeholders so that we can bring the Council's proposed Cherry Point amendments to a resolution that protects and benefits us all.

Thank you,

Alex Bergsma