

August 12, 2020

Whatcom County Planning Commission
5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, WA 98225

RE: August 13, 2020, Planning Commission public hearing.

Dear members of the Whatcom Planning Commission:

I am a Business Agent with IronWorkers local 86 representing 2,800 members.

Thank you for the thoughtful recommendations you have made so far to the County Council's proposed Cherry Point amendments. The Commission's open and transparent process enabled all the stakeholders to come together and help the Planning Commission make some well-informed recommendations. I also ask that you support the recommendations in the Joint Industry/ RE Sources Proposal that has been submitted to the Commission that covers some still unresolved issues.

The businesses at Cherry Point are a critical part of our County's economy. Besides paying hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes that fund so many of our county's public services, Cherry Point businesses also directly and indirectly employ more than 10,000 of Whatcom's residents. Whatcom's union and business leaders have voiced their concern that the Council's proposed changes could severely impact Cherry Point operations and threaten the jobs that we so desperately need right now. Unemployment claims are soaring across our state and we should be figuring out how to create more jobs, not creating policies that hinder job creation.

The recommendations that the Commission has made address many of the community's concerns with Council's proposed changes and Joint Proposal deals with some important remaining problem sections in the proposed amendments. Whatcom's union, business and community leaders have made themselves available to work with you and the Council. Please continue working with them to save our economy and our livelihoods.

Thank you,

Christopher Watrobka
Business Agent
IronWorkers 86