

**RAÚL R. LABRADOR**

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COMMITTEE ON  
THE JUDICIARY

COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 21, 2018

Admiral Karl L. Schultz  
Commandant  
U.S. Coast Guard  
2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. SE  
Washington, DC 20593

Dear Admiral Schultz:

I write to encourage your timely consideration of BNSF's proposed Sandpoint Junction Connector project on the railway's Great Northern Corridor in North Idaho near Sandpoint.

The Great Northern Corridor passing through Sandpoint allows the transportation of vital freight and passengers across the United States, making it a nationally significant transportation corridor. BNSF moves more than 1.4 million carloads of consumer goods and agricultural commodities through this corridor every year, helping keep Idaho's economy running. As rail traffic has increased, the existing one-lane bridge over Lake Pend Oreille has proven inadequate, causing bottlenecks and delays for both train traffic and automobile traffic as wait times at train crossings have increased.

BNSF has proposed construction of a new bridge over Lake Pend Oreille to alleviate the chokepoints and enable a more timely flow of commodities on which North Idaho's economy depends. Their proposed Sandpoint Junction Connector will also create safer roadways in the surrounding Idaho communities as drivers will see fewer train-related delays. BNSF has heavily invested in infrastructure and safety upgrades to the region and is poised to invest an additional \$100 million in Idaho to make other important upgrades.

Completion of BNSF's project will have a positive effect on North Idaho's economy and enable the free flow of goods throughout the region. I urge you to give the project timely consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raúl R. Labrador".

Raúl R. Labrador

Cc: U.S. Coast Guard Permits Division, Washington DC  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District

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