



Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District
Peter Browning, Second District
Lisa Janicki, Third District

February 23, 2023

The Honorable Senator Patty Murray
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Funding Request - City of Mount Vernon

Dear Senator Murray,

Please accept our letter of support for the City of Mount Vernon's request for \$3,000,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) to complete funding for their Mount Vernon Library Commons project.

This project, currently 93% funded and under construction, is a mixed-use civic building comprising their library, community center, EV charging, commercial kitchen, and adding parking to their downtown and I-5 corridor.

The Library Commons will replace the current library facility, which was last updated over 50 years ago. The new children's library will be the largest in Skagit, Island, and Whatcom Counties! This project will serve 62% of Mount Vernon students who are from low-income households. With numbers like these it is no surprise that the Mount Vernon City Library checks out 34% more resources to children than a typical public library.

The City partners with the Mount Vernon School District, Children's Council, Northwest STEM, Boys and Girls Club, Children of the Valley, Skagit County Juvenile Detention, and Skagit County Children's Museum to provide free and publicly accessible programs.

A modern library and community center with increased capacity will come with many community benefits. It will serve as a free and equitable place for early childhood education, literacy, support for entrepreneurs and job seekers, local and enriching master classes, lifelong learning and community connections building strong civic engagement.

Another exciting component to the commons will be a "mega" 76 electric vehicle charging station project. At the state level, we have ensured \$9 million in support. We understand that investing in projects like this exemplifies our commitment to reducing emissions through green infrastructure and transportation electrification. Upon completion, this project will serve as the first of its kind and will double the number of charging stations between Seattle and Vancouver BC.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Ron Wesen, Chair

Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

Peter Browning, Commissioner