

For immediate release:
December 11, 2018

Community, civic, environmental and conservation organizations ask Utah Inland Port Board to respond to concerns about allowing trucks on Legacy Parkway

A group of concerned community, civic and environmental organizations are calling on the Port Board to respond to talk of repealing the truck ban on the Legacy Parkway to accommodate increased truck traffic resulting from the proposed inland port. Legacy Parkway currently is a truck-free roadway, with wildlife habitat abutting it.

In a letter addressed to the Port Board to be delivered at the board meeting Wednesday (letter is copied below), the groups describe concern that adding trucks to the Legacy Parkway will harm people living nearby and adjacent wildlife habitat, as well as the northern Utah airshed.

“The current effort to allow truck traffic onto Legacy Parkway knowing full well that the Inland Port will substantially increase commercial traffic is ill-considered, unwise and yet another affront to air quality improvement efforts. It is clear that those leading the Inland Port initiative are not using their heads when looking at the long-term consequences of their proposed actions,” said Richard Holman, Co-Chair of the Westside Coalition, which is comprised of six Westside Salt Lake City communities united to actively advocate for the safety, health and quality of life of Westside residents.

The groups have been warning for months that increased freight traffic because of the proposed inland port will negatively impact air quality.

“With thousands of more diesel trucks, dozens more commodity loaded trains, and more airplane traffic coming in and out of Salt Lake City every day because of an inland port, it is obvious it will create a significant new source of pollution to an already severely impaired Wasatch Front airshed, something we have all witnessed in the last two weeks,” said Jonny Vasic, Executive Director of Utah Physician’s for a Healthy Environment.

"The truck ban was originally instituted due to Legacy's unique proximity to Great Salt Lake's wetlands, as declared and found by the Legislature. That proximity has not changed and lifting the ban will negatively impact bird habitats and wetlands," said Heather Dove, President of Great Salt Lake Audubon.

Representatives from the groups will speak to the Port Board about the concerns outlined in the letter during the public comment portion of the meeting at the Utah State Capitol tomorrow afternoon from 4-6 pm in room 450.

December 11, 2018

Dear Senator Buxton, Representative Gibson, Council Member Jensen, Council Member Rogers, Commissioner Ogden, Ms. Fritts, Ms. Cottle, Mr. Hart, Mr. Braceras, Mr. Clason, and Mr. Miller:

We read with concern a recent *Salt Lake Tribune* article describing the proposed Utah Inland Port as a reason to open Legacy Parkway to truck traffic.

We are concerned about what this would do to air quality locally and regionally, as well as how it can harm the people who live nearby, and the wildlife habitat.

Trucks are powered by diesel which is very polluting. And, as you know, Great Salt Lake and its wetlands provide habitat for up to 10 million migratory birds.

We're also concerned that the proposed inland port not be used as an excuse to open Legacy Parkway to trucks. We have little understanding of what the ultimate development plan for the proposed "inland port" is, or even how all of you define "inland port" – but everyone seems to agree that the Northwest Quadrant of Salt Lake City will take years to develop. Let's not use a speculative project – the inland port – as a justification to turn the Legacy Parkway into a highway.

As we've witnessed through the last few days, northern Utah has a serious air quality problem which harms every one of us, directly and indirectly. So, any proposal that might result in a significant increase in air pollution is of concern to us.

We should not forget that Salt Lake and Utah counties have been declared out of compliance with the provision of the Clean Air Act by the EPA. This is likely to result in heavy costs on Utah businesses by requiring them to adopt costly emission control technologies. Adding additional sources of air pollution as the Inland Port entails flies in the face of this reality.

When we've discussed our concern about the port increasing truck traffic, and thus air pollution, we've been told not to worry about it, or 'the great thing about the port is it will take trucks off the road' by using more rail. And then we hear that a State Senator thinks his bill to keep Legacy Parkway truck-free will "face significant opposition" because of expected truck traffic from the new inland port.

We are blessed to live in a beautiful state, where quality of life is good. We want Utah to be a healthy, prosperous place to live in the future. To make this happen we need to solve our air quality problems, and "inland port" development should not make them worse.

Sincerely,

Richard Holman, Co-Chair
Westside Coalition

Lynn De Freitas, Executive Director
FRIENDS of Great Salt Lake

Ann O'Connell, Natural Resources Chair
League of Women Voters of Salt Lake

Heather Dove, President
Great Salt Lake Audubon

Jonny Vasic, Executive Director
Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment

Shauna Smith

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Robyn Adamson,
Salt Lake Air Protectors

Kathy Fitzgerald

Terry Marasco,
Utah Moms for Clean Air

Terry Thomas, Vice-Chair
Westpointe Community Council

Allan Phelps, Board Member
Westpointe Community Council

Dane Hess, Chair
Glendale Community Council

Terry Winget

David Scheer, Chair
Capitol Hill Action Group