

# Port of Everett

## Proposition 1

### Ballot Title

#### Number of Port Commissioners

The Commissioners of the Port of Everett adopted Resolution No. 934-A concerning a proposition to increase the number of port commissioners. This proposition would increase the number of commissioners of the Port District from three (3) commissioners to five (5) commissioners. Should this proposition be approved or rejected?

### Explanatory Statement

Current Situation: The Port of Everett has three (3) elected Port Commissioners. If approved, this proposition will increase the number of port commissioners of the Port of Everett from three commissioners to five commissioners. The two additional port commissioners filling these newly created positions will be elected at the next port district general election.

### Statement For

*Statement by: Frank Foster, Duane Pearson, Peggy Toepel*

Since the Port district was created in 1918, Port business has grown significantly more varied and complex. No longer is the Port focused on wood products but is broadly diversified. District population has increased; markets, facilities, and technologies continually change. Successful conduct of Port enterprises, local and international, requires alert, fully engaged oversight by the Port Commission. Adding two members to the Port Commission directly benefits:

- **DECISION-MAKING** – a 5-member commission encourages consideration of greater depth and diversity of viewpoints, and reduces the risk of domination by one or two individuals as the current structure allows.
- **COMMUNICATION AMONG COMMISSIONERS** – The open meeting laws prohibit the 3 commissioners from communicating with each other except in public forum. This is an unnecessary constraint. Expansion to a 5-member commission removes that constraint, allowing constructive exchange between commissioners prior to voting and enabling them to be better prepared to articulate their support, concerns, and recommendations in their constituents' interest.
- **COMPETITION** – The Port must compete with other West Coast ports and the added members expand the effort for finding new opportunities. Adding two commissioners increases opportunities for engagement with voters, regional organizations, and domestic and international business communities. These are improvements observed and reported by commissioners from other port districts that made the change from a 3-member commission to a 5-member commission. Currently, Seattle, Tacoma, Edmonds, Anacortes, and Orcas Island have 5 commissioners.

### Statement Against

*Statement by: Phil Bannan, Don Hopkins, Jeff LaLone*

Do you really want to pay for more government? The addition of two more commissioners will increase the average annual cost of port commissioners by \$68,000 per year. In addition, there will be two more elections every six years which average \$27,000 each. Furthermore, significant additional staff time will be required to support the additional elected official while commission meetings take more time and decisions take longer. Do you really want port commissioners to discuss port business privately rather than conducting port business in a public meeting? With three commissioners they can only discuss port business in a public meeting. With five, a commissioner can discuss port business with another commissioner in private. There is a lot more opportunity for collusion and back-room deals. Of Washington State's 75 public ports only 5 have more than three commissioners. Since 1918 the public has been well served by the Port of Everett as it is currently constituted. Vote no to added cost and loss of transparency. Vote no on this proposition.

# Port of Everett

## Proposition 1 (continued)

### Rebuttal of Statement Against

An expanded commission will add costs to the Port's operating budget, but there will be NO added cost to the taxpayer since taxes paid to the Port via property taxes are used "only for Capital improvements and debt service". Commissioner salaries and the cost of elections are paid out of the annual income generated by Port operations not from the taxpayer!

With THREE votes needed for majority, there's reduced risk of secret deals.

### Rebuttal of Statement For

We agree, the world is certainly more complex than it was in 1918. The professional staff of the port, and today's commissioners have also become more sophisticated and knowledgeable. Today's three commissioners are indeed capable of addressing today's issues.

Don't forget, the commission's role is to set policy and provide oversight. They get plenty of input from the public and have a staff of professionals. There's no need for more government.