January \_\_\_, 2015

Senator Christine Rolfes Washington State Senate

233 John A. Cherberg Building

P.O. Box 40423

Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Senator Rolfes:

I am writing you on a Capital Budget item where your help could result in Bainbridge Island being able to complete a project that would drive economic development, create a vibrant community gathering space and encourage recreational activity.

The specific Capital Budget program I'm writing about is the Recreation Resource Account, funded in the Capital Budget as the *Boating Facilities Program* (BFP). The funding for this grant program comes from the unclaimed gas tax refunds from boaters, and $3.3 million was diverted from the account in 2012.

In the most recent round of applications for Boating Facilities Program funds, the Eagle Harbor Waterfront City Dock project was ranked 14 out of 21 local projects submitted by cities, counties, and ports. Under the current funding level for the grant, this project receives **none of the funding** required for project completion. That's a problem because improvements are necessary to Waterfront Park as well as the City Dock, and the City does not have the capacity to fund both projects. At this point, funding for the project includes $1.5 M from the Washington State Ferries Settlement and $700,000 from City General Funds. Without funding from the Boating Facilities Program, successful completion of the project is jeopardized.

I’m sure you are aware of the importance of boat launches and boating infrastructure in communities like ours. These amenities create hubs for shared activities, attract tourism, and boost our economy. The current City Dock serves a wide range of users, but does not support all of these users well. Improving the City Dock would help to support our growing rowing community, while providing infrastructure that would support increased boat traffic. The proposed project would also allow us to make important ADA improvements to Waterfront Park, providing increased accessibility for users, while also increasing waterfront views for community members and visitors. The City of Bainbridge Island has received significant community input through our public participation process for the Waterfront Park/City Dock Project. Improving boating facilities at Waterfront Park is an important element to creating and maintaining a vibrant downtown Winslow.

This is where the $3.3 million comes in. If the Legislature restores these funds to the

Boating Facilities Program in the 2015 - 17 Capital Budget, the Eagle Harbor Dock project receives *partial* funding.

I understand Sen. Honeyford, the Capital Budget Chair, is aware of this $3.3 million restoration- if you could talk with him and explain the significance for our project on Bainbridge Island, I would greatly appreciate it.

Thank you for your help and time.