

June 30, 2005

Governor Christine Gregoire  
200 Legislative Building  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504

re: Request for Special Legislative Session

Dear Governor Gregoire;

I respectfully request that you exercise your authority under Article 2, Section 12 of the Washington State Constitution to convene a special legislative session to terminate the Seattle Monorail Project.

As you are probably aware, the Seattle Monorail Project has become the subject of increasing scrutiny by State Auditor Brian Sonntag and State Treasurer Mike Murphy. I also have serious concerns about the project's management and its fiscal impact on the City of Seattle. Recently, I have requested both a fiscal and performance audit of the project.

Although the Monorail was approved by a majority of Seattle voters, there are known financial shortfalls and the actual project cost has become a moving target. With the announcement by Monorail officials of an additional \$9 billion dollars in interest payments, costs have now ballooned to \$11 billion for the 14-mile elevated train. Principal and interest payments on the project would last the next 50 years or longer. With most of the project being financed through the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax, the MVET could burden Seattle drivers, according to some projections, as far out as 2078.

The Monorail Board is now considering whether to borrow up to \$350 million to cover the next phase of planning and construction. This move would obligate Seattle drivers to pay the additional 1.4 percent MVET tax for years to come, even if the project falls apart and no monorail is built.

I have further concerns with the apparent heavy reliance upon the MVET. The assumed growth of MVET can only come from increased ownership in vehicles and/or increased value in vehicles sold. I find it ironic that the monorail - designed to reduce Seattle's reliance on the automobile - will rely so heavily on continuing automobile use and valuation. If the monorail succeeds, it will undermine the very source of income upon which it will depend.

I seek your assistance in avoiding a huge disservice to the citizens of the City of Seattle. I respectfully request that you convene a special session of the legislature for the purpose of repealing the monorail's authority.

Sincerely,

Senator Ken Jacobsen  
46<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

