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From: Jessie Griess (mailto:jessgriess@yahoo.com)
Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2004 2:40 PM
To: awvdeiscomments@wadot.wa.gov
Subject: Draft EIS Concerns

Dear WashDOT and City of Seattle Members:

I am writing to share my concerns about the proposed drafts for rebuilding Seattle's city waterfront.

As a resident of downtown Seattle and as one of the many pedestrians that walks under the existing viaduct daily on my way to and from work, I have a vested interest in seeing Seattle's waterfront become a living city center. I share the waterfront vision of many others - a waterfront filled with pedestrian spaces and amenities that serve the broad demographic profile that constitutes Seattle's public community. In this vision I look forward to a time when all of the adjacent downtown neighborhoods feature useable connections to Seattle's waterfront, fostering and adding life to our new urban center. This waterfront vision considers our incredible natural surroundings, resources and precious habitats as crucial elements to Seattle's future appeal.

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Our living waterfront vision cannot be realized, and cultural amenities that will truly serve the public of Seattle cannot be cultivated in a scenario where motorized traffic is the predominant feature of our waterfront, as suggested by ALL of the current EIS draft viaduct replacement options. The only thing that 8 lanes of motorized traffic along Alaskan Way can contribute to Seattle's waterfront is a congested and hazardous highway - completely devoid of pedestrian life (as is the void that currently defines the underside of Seattle's existing viaduct). The current draft suggestions do not allow for the thriving community growth, public pedestrian spaces, and the types of neighborhood businesses and amenities that will make our waterfront a destination and a joy to those that live, work and visit our beautiful city.

As a concerned resident of Seattle, I implore you to continue considering options for Seattle's waterfront that do not require so much of our valuable public waterfront space to be consumed by vehicle traffic. I encourage you to require that a strong connection be enforced from the waterfront to our other local treasures, such as Pike Place Market, Pioneer Square, and other waterfront neighborhoods, which can in part be accomplished through the extension of the proposed Highway 99 tunnel lid, and the public-space connections that such a solution provides.

I feel that it is only through endeavors like these that our precious resources can be preserved for future generations to enjoy, and that through our perseverance, time, and dedication our city can grow to become one of the most thriving and desirable cities in the US.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jessie R. Griess

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The Surface Alternative is no longer being considered because it does not meet the project's purpose and need to provide capacity to and through downtown Seattle.

The lead agencies have identified the Bored Tunnel Alternative as the preferred alternative. If the viaduct is replaced by a tunnel, more open space would become available. This new space could become a wide waterfront promenade with bike and pedestrian paths. However, the final configuration of Alaskan Way will be determined by the Central Waterfront Project being led by the City of Seattle.