



A project of the Richland Public Facilities District

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April 2, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray
2988 Jackson Federal Building
915 2nd Avenue, Seattle WA 98174

Re: Port of Benton's White Bluffs STEM Center

Dear Senator Murray,

The REACH Museum enthusiastically supports the Port of Benton's Congressional funding request for the development of the White Bluffs STEM Center. This center provides the needed infrastructure to support our growing community, train our work force, as well as bolster our local tourism industry.

Place-based experiences and STEM tourism are the marketing niche of our region. In 2023, the Tri-Cities was designated an American World War II Heritage City by the National Park Service. Only one American World War II Heritage City can be designated in each state or territory. The proposed White Bluffs STEM Center will play a significant role in supporting this designation which honors the work and sacrifices made by men and women of our region to support the war effort.

The White Bluffs STEM Center will also house WSU's Hanford History Project and serve as a launch point for the Department of Energy's B-Reactor Tours which are offered in partnership with Manhattan National Historical Park. The Hanford History Project is the caretaker of a wealth of Manhattan Project artifacts. Its team has also captured oral and video histories of Hanford Workers and their families to preserve their wartime legacy. Additionally, the propose project will also highlight the USS Triton Park and submarine sail.

All these endeavors, complemented by the work of the REACH Museum and the Pasco Aviation Museum among others, provide robust programming centered on the history of the Mid-Columbia River region, its people and its impact on the world. Stories worthy of sharing with our local citizenry, as well as visitors from around the world who are curious about the uniqueness of our "back yard."

The REACH Museum looks forward to partnering with the Port of Benton to ensure the proposed White Bluffs STEM Center is an incredible success. We fully support the Port of Benton's proposal and we respectfully ask for your support of their funding request.

Sincerely,

Rosanna Sharpe
Executive Director