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**Washington Council on International Trade and Pacific Merchant Shipping Association Praise
Washington Gubernatorial Candidates for Focus on Trade and Maritime Issues and
Urge Increased State Efforts to Support These Industries**

Seattle – On June 6, the Washington Council on International Trade (WCIT) and the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA) held a forum with Gubernatorial Candidates Jay Inslee and Rob McKenna on maritime and trade issues.

“The Washington Council on International Trade is pleased to hear both candidates recognize the importance of international trade to our state’s economy,” said WCIT President Eric Schinfeld. **“With more than one-in three jobs in Washington state tied to trade, we need to continue to invest in the infrastructure, policy and programs that help our companies compete in the global economy.”**

Each candidate spoke and took questions from trade and maritime industry stakeholders on their plans to ensure that Washington maintains and increases its trade and port competitiveness.

PMSA Vice President Michael Moore agreed: **“Two-thirds of the import cargo moving through Seattle and Tacoma is headed for markets in the Midwest and beyond. Ports and regions are investing millions in infrastructure to compete for this cargo. Cost, reliability and regulatory certainty will drive cargo routing decisions – it is critical that our elected officials recognize this.”**

WCIT and PMSA will work to ensure our state’s elected officials understand how we can effectively compete to increase trade, cargo and maritime jobs. Strategic investments, a constructive regulatory environment and well-designed work force training will help provide Washington a strong trade and maritime economy for years to come.

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About the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association

The Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA) represents shipping lines, marine terminal operators and others that move ships and cargo into and out of West Coast ports. Members include both U.S. and Foreign flagged vessels, plying both Coastal and Trans-Pacific trades. PMSA promotes policies that support and grow responsible trade and maritime activities.

For more information, contact Jordan Royer, Vice President for External Affairs of the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, at 206.441.0182 or jroyer@pmsaship.com

About the Washington Council on International Trade

The Washington Council on International Trade (WCIT) is dedicated to growing our state's economy through public policies favorable to expanded opportunities in the global marketplace. WCIT members are farmers, manufacturers, retailers, service providers, non-profit organizations and individuals who support a strong trade policy that benefits Washington's small, medium and large companies and creates jobs for Washington residents.

For more information, contact Eric Schinfeld, President of the Washington Council on International Trade, at 206.389.7273 or erics@wcit.org