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Dear Chair Wasserman,

I am writing to urge you to vote to allow the proposed Howard Terminal project to move forward, by following the Bay Conservation and Development Commission's (BCDC) staff recommendation and approving the removal of the Port Priority Use (PPU) designation from Howard Terminal.

As you know, the proposed Howard Terminal project would convert a piece of land, which both the professional staff and board of the Port of Oakland have deemed unsuited to meet the needs of a modern seaport, into a mixed-use development – significantly heightening its value beyond the informal parking lot currently on that site. As BCDC staff concluded in their report recommending the removal of Howard Terminal's PPU designation, the use of Howard Terminal is not necessary to meet our region's current and future cargo capacity needs. Per the staff report, the forecasted growth of regional cargo needs can be met without the Howard Terminal site – and even in the case of a moderate growth scenario, would remain well above the cargo growth patterns that Oakland has seen over the last 12 years.

Given Howard Terminal's location adjacent to Jack London Square, and to transit and transportation, the proposed Howard Terminal development project is a much better use of the site. It would bring with it historic regional benefits. That is why the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) both designated Howard Terminal as a "Priority Development Area," in the unanimously approved Plan Bay Area 2050. The unprecedented investments that would come with the proposed project would bring with it much-needed housing, jobs, and infrastructure improvements to the area.

In my role as the Chair of the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee, I grapple every day with how to create more much-needed housing in our communities – and to do it in a way that supports our working families. That's why I'm excited to see that the proposed Howard Terminal development includes 3,000 housing units, with the City of Oakland requiring that 15% of units be affordable, as well as 25,000 construction jobs, and 7,100 permanent jobs – including saving thousands of current jobs for employees who work at the Oakland Coliseum.

Furthermore, creating more homes with access to existing transit systems is crucial to reducing our region's greenhouse gas emissions, while also meeting our growing housing needs. The proposed Howard Terminal project would provide future residents with the opportunity for convenient, car-free living. It also includes 18 acres of new parks and waterfront open space, which can be enjoyed by current and future Oakland residents alike.

Projects that bring with them these kinds of gains for our region are rare – that is why I am writing to respectfully urge you to allow the Howard Terminal project to move forward, by voting tomorrow to approve the removal of the Port Priority Use Designation. Not doing so would result in a tremendous loss for the City of Oakland and the entire East Bay community. We are counting on you to keep this proposal on track, and moving forward.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your continued service to our region on the BCDC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Buffy Wicks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Buffy Wicks

Chair, Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee
Member, Assembly District 15