

Federal Legislative Agenda for 2026

January 27, 2026

Eric Schinfeld, Sr. Manager, Federal & International Government Relations, Port of Seattle

Overview

- 2025 Key Accomplishments & Challenges
- 2026 Outlook
- Overview of Draft 2026 Policy Priorities
 - Areas of Potential Progress
 - Areas of Potential Concern
- Next steps
 - Seek Commission adoption at 1/27/26 meeting

2025 Successes

- **Secondary Noise Insulation**
 - After 8 years, Representative Smith and Senator Murray successfully passed legislation to allow for federal funding for the repair and replacement of federally-funded sound insulation
- **FY26 Congressionally Directed Spending**
 - \$1,000,000 for a Seattle Waterfront Sea Level Rise Resiliency Study
 - \$250,000 to replace the Pier 86 Grain Terminal switcher locomotive
- **Sustainable Aviation Fuels**
 - Successfully retained the Sustainable Aviation Fuel Blender's Tax Credit in the "One Big Beautiful Bill" despite most other clean energy tax credits getting eliminated
- **Other Positive OBBB items**
- \$4.1 billion to hire and train at least 5,000 new CBP officers and \$2 billion to retain existing staff
- \$625 million for security and operational support for the 2026 FIFA World Cup
- \$12.5 billion to modernize air traffic control
- \$24.6 billion for Coast Guard, including for vessel procurement and investments in shore facilities.
- Ends the tariff exemption on all de minimis imports

Impactful Progress on Current Port Priorities

2025 Challenges

- Immigration restrictions & deportations
- Budget cuts and federal staffing cuts
- Trade & Tariffs
- Environmental policy & funding rollbacks and removal of clean energy tax credits
- Anti-equity efforts and DBE changes
- Increased international travel restrictions and fees
- Grant criteria changes
- Federal government shutdown

Major Executive Actions on Issues of Concern to the Port

2026 Outlook

- Republicans maintain full control in Washington, DC: White House, Senate, and House of Representatives
 - Small Congressional majorities and focus on November election means limited opportunity for major legislation
- Congress still working to finalize all FY26 appropriations by on January 30.
 - High likelihood that DHS funding (including TSA & CBP staffing) is extended through a continuing resolution until September 30 (at FY24 funding levels) rather than a full year funding bill.
- Some “must-pass” legislation could move this year of interest to the Port, including the farm bill and the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), which is important for US Army Corps project authorization and Harbor Maintenance Tax funding
- High likelihood of major new initiatives at the Executive level, including more executive orders and regulatory rollbacks.

Opportunities for Progress Will Be Limited in 2026

Opportunities for Progress

I. Retention of Proposed FY26 Investments and Potential FY27 Investments

- 1) Final FY26 Transportation and Commerce funding bills should include our “earmark” requests
- 2) Will seek both “earmarks” and grant funding in 2026 for key Port projects

II. Implementation of Congressionally Approved Policies

- 3) FAA implementation of the four StART Priorities included in the 2024 FAA Reauthorization legislation
- 4) Implementation of NDAA language directing FAA to allow certain airports to use existing federal funding to repair or replace federally funded sound insulation in near-airport residences

III. Shipbuilding Promotion and Maritime Investments

- 5) Bipartisan interest in SHIPS Act to incentivize U.S. shipbuilding
- 6) Make progress on Harbor Maintenance Tax reforms and funding through WRDA
- 7) Support additional trade policies that disincentivize cargo diversion from NWSA to British Columbia

IV. Clean Energy

- 8) Continue SAF investments in the Farm Bill
- 9) Promote alternative maritime fuels, including hydrogen
- 10) Support major bipartisan permitting reform, including for siting new clean energy facilities

Still a chance to do a few things

Areas of Concern

- Immigration restrictions & deportations
- Budget cuts and federal staffing cuts
- Trade & Tariffs
- Environmental policy & funding rollbacks
- Anti-equity efforts and DBE changes
- Increased international travel restrictions
- Federal government shutdown (next deadline is January 30)

Same list as for 2025!

Next Steps

- **February 2026** – Meetings with Congressional offices to distribute agenda and share priorities
- **March – December 2025** – Commissioners and Port Executives participation in DC advocacy
 - AAPA Legislative Summit: March 4-6, 2026
 - ACI/AAAE Washington Legislative Conference: March 17-19, 2026
 - Pacific NW Waterways Association Mission to Washington: April 20-23, 2026
 - StART DC Fly-in: April 21-23, 2026
 - AWB DC Fly-in: December 1-3, 2026

Questions?