

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 26, 2022

The Honorable John Hairston  
Administrator  
Bonneville Power Administration  
905 NE 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Portland, OR 97208

Dear Administrator Hairston:

We write to urge the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) to work in good faith with Blue Wolf Capital and appropriate labor groups<sup>1</sup> to reach a competitive power agreement sufficient to reopen the Intalco aluminum smelter in Ferndale, Washington. Restarting Intalco is important for our economic recovery and national security. We appreciate your commitment to promoting economic prosperity in the Pacific Northwest and your participation in ongoing discussions to meet the energy needs of the smelter. To that end, we hope that you are considering all options that could spark new life into Intalco and restore the hundreds of jobs lost by Alcoa's decision to curtail the facility in 2020.

As we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and work to forge more resilient supply chains, reopening Intalco is an incredible opportunity to bring back over 700 family-wage union jobs and restore the only source of domestically produced aluminum west of the Mississippi River. Prior to its curtailment, the Intalco plant was one of the largest employers in Whatcom County, supporting thousands of indirect jobs and economic activity throughout our region in addition to the workers at the facility itself. Restarting Intalco would allow Washingtonians to return to these high-paying jobs, reinvigorate our economy, and secure our domestic production capacity to make aluminum in America for years to come.

After Intalco workers were laid off in 2020, many of them were forced to take jobs with lower pay and benefits and a longer commute. While members of the Washington Congressional Delegation worked closely with our state and federal government to provide economic support and job retraining services to workers and families impacted by the curtailment,<sup>2</sup> no such support could replace the opportunities provided by Intalco. We have heard from local labor leaders that the vast majority of workers previously employed at Intalco are ready and excited to return. Furthermore, the Lummi Nation has committed to establish a job training partnership for its members to help meet the workforce needs of Intalco.

Additionally, ensuring that the United States maintains sufficient domestic aluminum production is in our national security interests, as aluminum is used in defense, aerospace, and many other critical infrastructure sectors. Unfortunately, U.S. production of aluminum has declined substantially in recent years, falling more than 40 percent between 2010 and 2020 and more than

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<sup>1</sup> The Washington State Labor Council and International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

<sup>2</sup> "Following Push from Washington Lawmakers, Alcoa Workers Approved for Trade Adjustment Assistance," July 8, 2020, <https://delbene.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=2625>.

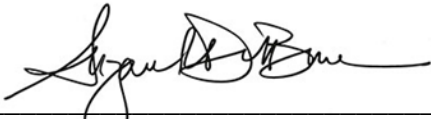
80 percent since 1980. The U.S. has gone from having 22 active smelters in 1993 to just six today. Largely due to unfair Chinese and other government subsidies, American smelters have become relatively less competitive, according to a 2018 investigation by the Department of Commerce. China now produces 57 percent of the world's aluminum, 35 times more than the United States. While Congress and the Administration are working with allies to address these harmful foreign subsidies,<sup>3</sup> we must act now to defend American production capacity and American jobs in critical sectors such as aluminum.

Concerns regarding our substantial and increasing dependence on imports from Chinese and other foreign state-owned enterprises for aluminum have only been heightened by Vladimir Putin's misguided and tragic invasion of Ukraine. Russia is another major exporter of aluminum to the United States, with exports valued at more than \$600 million in 2021. We must substantially reduce imports of Russian products to ensure that the United States is not financing Putin's war. Instead, Intalco can help meet U.S. demand by producing aluminum in line with the Administration's objectives to secure and strengthen critical supply chains.

For these reasons, we call on BPA to negotiate in good faith to support the reopening of Intalco.

We appreciate your time and attention to this matter and thank you for your full and fair consideration consistent with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

Sincerely,



Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress



Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



Patty Murray  
United States Senator

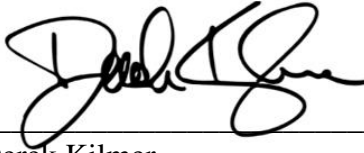


Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



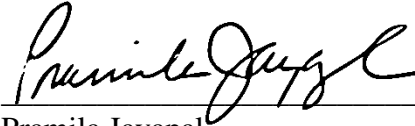
Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress

<sup>3</sup> Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, "Joint US-EU Statement on Trade in Steel and Aluminum," October 31, 2021, <https://ustr.gov/about-us/policy-offices/press-office/press-releases/2021/october/joint-us-eu-statement-trade-steel-and-aluminum>.



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Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



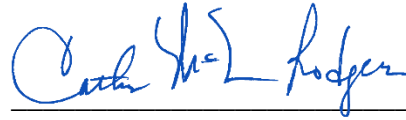
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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



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Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



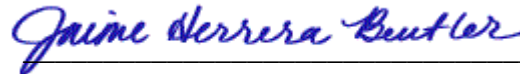
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Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress



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Dan Newhouse  
Member of Congress



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Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Member of Congress

CC: Jennifer Granholm, Secretary of Energy

CC: Celeste Drake, Made in America Director