

International
Association of
Machinists and
Aerospace Workers



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OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

Written Testimony of

ROBERT MARTINEZ, JR.

International President

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

RE: Support for proposed funding in the Fiscal Year 2022 Washington State Capitol Budget (HB 1781) for aluminum smelter restart project which will create aluminum manufacturing jobs in Whatcom county, reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses and increase energy efficiency.

Submitted to House Capitol Budget Committee Washington State Legislature on January 11, 2022

Thank you Chair Tharinger and members of the House Capitol Budget Committee for providing the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue before the committee. **I am writing on behalf of more than 600,000 active and retired members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), in strong support of funding included in the Capitol Budget State Building Construction Account to advance the "point feed modernization" project for the Intalco Smelter located in Ferndale, Washington.**

For decades, the Machinists Union has proudly represented more than 700 highly skilled aluminum production workers at the Intalco smelter. Nearly two years ago, the owner of the facility, Alcoa Corporation, shut down operations at the smelter, putting these 700 hard working men and women out of work. The impact on these workers, their families and the surrounding community has been devastating. From the moment the facility was shuttered, the Machinists Union has been working with all willing partners and stakeholders in an effort to reopen the smelter and restore these high-quality union jobs.

The funding included in the FY22 Washington State Capitol Budget to modernize the point feed system at the Intalco smelter is critical to the ultimate reopening of the facility and to the restoration of 700 high-wage, Machinists union jobs. In addition, thousands of additional indirect and induced jobs across the state will be created and supported by the reopening.

The proposed modern point feed technology automates the efficient input of alumina into the smelting pots in small, almost continuous quantities. The modernization of the point feed system greatly increases the efficiency of the smelter and is essential to ensuring the operation's competitiveness moving forward as well as its ability to produce green aluminum subject to the highest standards of environmental performance. The modernization allowed by this funding will enable the Intalco smelter to become one of only 2 producers in the United States which can produce certified green aluminum and will dramatically reduce the plant's emission of greenhouse gases, fluoride and particulates. In addition, point feed modernization will substantially increase workplace safety, energy efficiency and production.

The Machinists Union and our partners are making substantial progress in our efforts to restart operations at the Intalco facility, restore more than 700 direct Union jobs and return sustainable manufacturing to Washington State. However, the funding included in the FY22 Washington State Capitol Budget to modernize the point feed system is critical to the successful reopening of the smelter. For all of these reasons, I strongly support this budget provision and respectfully urge you to retain this vitally important funding in the final budget.

Thank you,

Robert Martinez, Jr.
International President