



METROPOLITAN KING COUNTY COUNCIL

Councilmember Pete von Reichbauer

Governor Chris Gregoire
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Gregoire:

According to the Seattle Fremont Individuals & Employees Nonprofit to Decrease Suicides organization (Seattle FRIENDS), over 230 people have committed suicide from the Aurora Bridge since it was constructed in 1931. It is the second deadliest "suicide bridge" in the USA, behind the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, CA. On average, someone leaps from the bridge once every three months, and over half of the victims land on the busy intersections below or in the plaza of neighboring businesses. This is a safety issue, a mental health issue, an economic issue, a transportation issue, and an issue of basic human decency.

One potential solution is to build a barrier. This option is strongly supported by the Seattle FRIENDS organization whose sole mission is to eliminate suicides from the Aurora Bridge. A significant number of people live, work and play directly beneath the bridge, and regularly suffer by witnessing these gruesome events, as well as being put at considerable physical risk.

The issue of suicide on the Aurora Bridge must be addressed, especially with the re-opening of the widely traveled Burke-Gilman trail next spring, and I ask that you join me in support of a solution. I would greatly appreciate discussing this matter further with your appropriate staff. Please feel free to contact me at (206) 296-1007.

With best wishes,

Pete von Reichbauer
King County Councilmember
29 October 2007

CC: Nick Licata, President Seattle City Council
Paula J. Hammond, Transportation Secretary WSDOT
Suzie Burke, Fremont Dock Company
Ryan Thurston, Seattle FRIENDS