

Vice President Toshiko Grace Hasegawa Reception Remarks

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

How about a round of applause for Alyssa?

Alyssa, I think I speak for everyone when I say: **you** embody the future that we wish to see.

You represent the talent and wisdom that the next generation has to offer. Thank you for being here.

You know, what Alyssa was talking about is called environmental justice.

She described how environmental policy, public health, economic opportunity and social justice are all related.

I joined the port with the philosophy that advancing our goals in one of these areas, will support the others.

Because a healthy planet, a healthy economy, and healthy communities go hand-in-hand.

What brings me to the Port of Seattle Commission is our potential to make a holistic, positive change for people and our planet.

This is where corporate capitalism meets environmental advocacy – and right here, we have the expertise, values, and resources necessary to answer the challenges we face as a society: climate change, poverty, illness, and injustice.

America is on the brink of a paradigm shift - one where we abandon fossil fuels and step into a clean sustainable future.

And that shift starts right here at our front doorstep are traveling the world to understand how we can shape our supply chain to promote clean fuels.

Maritime and aviation industries **both** are revolutionizing their technology, their operations, **and** their culture.

And I could not be more proud of the leadership the Port has demonstrated in facilitating this transformation.

In the past year, we have accelerated our carbon emissions reduction goals and timeline.

We've authorized unprecedented investments – that's \$5.3 billion – into modern, green facilities at our sea and airport

We've quadrupled our investment into career readiness and economic development via the Youth Maritime Initiative, green jobs, and our small business support program.

We've expanded our partnerships with labor, non-profits, industry players, and historically excluded communities in South King County, the Duwamish Valley, and South Seattle.

This is just a snapshot of the foundation that we've laid in the 2023 budget.

I will tell you that none of it is possible without the Port of Seattle staff. For the past year, I've had the honor of getting to see them in action — up close and personal. Their expertise and professionalism is second to none. They are truly our greatest asset.

I'd like to thank each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication.

The Port of Seattle Commission is a special-purpose government – it's not a legislative body and there are no checks and balances. We five are vested with all the authority of the Port of Seattle, with some authority delegated to the Executive Director.

Commissioners Mohamed, Felleman, Cho, Calkins, and I represent the most diverse Commission in port history, and one of the youngest, most diverse elected governments anywhere.

Two women, three people of color, and three under the age of 40.

We approach our work from many different perspectives. Yet, we are never so far apart that it impedes our progress.

Diversity does not mean division.

In fact, it is **exactly** our differences that make our Commission more effective.

By leading from our lived experiences, collectively we are better informed, it promotes more robust discussions, and results in better final policy.

Leadership is a precious privilege – one that each of us as elected officials aim to carry with integrity, humility, and distinction.

I have had the honor of working alongside Commissioner Cho in several capacities from the state legislature to the state's commission on Asian-Pacific American Affairs.

Sam, today I get to call you President Cho. This accomplishment is truly all of ours, because it represents another glass ceiling shattered. And I know that you will execute your duties in a way that will make your ancestors and your posterity proud. I look forward to supporting your vision for the next year.

Finally, and most importantly, I am joined today by my baby girl, along with my husband Michael and my mother, Lindy.

As I reflect on my work from this past year and as I think about my goals for what's to come, every moment, every decision, and every reason why, returns to them.

I think of the type of future I want for my daughter and for all of our children – one where they will breathe deeply, move freely, and thrive independently. I am bringing that sense of purpose to this position, and that resolve to this work.

Thank you for your trust in me. What comes next is what matters most, and I'm honored to be a part of this moment.

Now to Commissioner Calkins for closing remarks.