



**Rainier
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February 6, 1998

Ms Pat Dutton, Assistant Director
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
P.O. Box 47250
Olympia, Wa. 98504

TV- 971477

Dear Ms Dutton

It has taken a few days to absorb and put into perspective the events of the first stakeholders meeting held January 29, 1998. I have been a part of this industry for 35 years, which in the eyes of many may be too long. However, I am proud of our industry and the professionalism exhibited by my industry peers as demonstrated at the recent meeting. I believe the service rendered to the moving public is not without error, however, for the most part it is a record of which we can be proud. I believe the number of complaints received by the commission will bear this out. So why is the commission in such a hurry to fix something that isn't broken?

I find it hard to believe that after 20 years of Mike the Mover making a mockery of the Washington State legislative process, and the rules and regulations developed by the WUTC that he is now rewarded by being a part of the restructuring of our industry. This is the first opportunity I have had to meet Mr. Mover, and I assure you he lived up to all my expectations. I was taught as young man to take my hat off when I entered a building; quite frankly I found his demeanor both confrontational and boorish. Then of course we had Mr. Palm with his hat on backwards, and the proud owner of a used bread truck pontificating about the virtues of his fine company. Is this what the commission has in mind when it speaks of ease entry/public interest/fit and willing?

If your focus is consumer protection I really don't believe the public is being served by heading down this road. Mr. Spellman spoke of his \$60,000 degree and the lack of guaranteed success. In addition to my degree we have spent over a million dollars to bring our company to its present level. There was certainly no guarantee of success then nor is there now. Fifteen years ago we paid \$13,000 for our permit {not \$40,000} adding equipment and staff as we grew. We now own a 40,000 square foot warehouse and 20 pieces of rolling stock. All of this was done within the laws of our state while at the same time paying B & O taxes, L & I payments and the other applicable state, county and city taxes. Our employees are paid a living wage, health benefits and are able to participate in a 401 K plan. In addition we spend a lot of time and money on employee training. Two of our employees have just completed a \$5000 training program, and are now facilitators for the rest of our outside employees.

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The service we provide is very customer sensitive requiring their trust that their belongings are handled by quality people that are trained and qualified to complete the move in a professional manner.

Presently the WUTC is attempting to regulate 130 active certificated movers, and the easing of entry is only going to exacerbate the situation. The WUTC already is having a problem with enforcement because of the lack of funds and personnel. How is the agency going to handle the additional workload with double the number of participants in our industry? Again, this doesn't seem to be consumer sensitive. If you want to view the results of deregulation one needs look no further then the Seattle cab industry. The city and the county are in the continuing process of re-regulating it economically, improving equipment safety and driver quality.

I agree with both Jack Davis and Jim Tutton in their closing statements that if it is the intent of the WUTC to ease entry as well as economically deregulate our industry in one fashion or another than the balance of your agenda becomes moot, and leaves little need for further discussion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George Fouch", written in dark ink.

George Fouch
President