

My name is Gerald Fox. I am a retired Transportation Engineer. I live in Portland.

I have been following the CRC Project (now rebranded as the I-5 replacement project) with a growing sense of dismay and foreboding. Driven by staff and consultants obsessed with building a big new bridge, and awash with public money, the CRC Project has gone disastrously astray. Tens of millions of dollars have been wasted designing the wrong type bridge, ignoring the Coastguard's requirements, and on massive engineering cost over-runs. Millions more of public money have been squandered on the unprecedented lobbying efforts that may yet prevent this project from dying, regardless of the real consequences for the transportation system and taxpayers statewide.

The CRC Project is bad transportation. It is environmentally inappropriate. It conflicts with regional land use goals, and the financing plan is a looming disaster. It flies in the face of efforts to combat climate change, and is certain to incur devastating cost over-runs destined to become its legacy, and burden Oregon taxpayers for decades to come.

Everyone agrees that something needs to be done about the CRC. But the present proposal is more about trying to justify a massive and unnecessary new bridge and freeway expansion, rather than trying to expand the transportation system in a manner more appropriate to the needs of the 21st Century.

During today's hearing you will hear that **all** of the expectations contained in the CRC Project "Purpose and Need" can be accomplished, or at least mitigated by alternatives that would cost less, could be built faster, with less risk, fewer impacts, eventually delivering greater transportation capacity and a wider range of travel options.

For instance, a genuine multi-modal approach would allow the region's real transportation needs to be achieved incrementally, through a series of smaller, more manageable, more affordable projects. Under a coordinated regional planning umbrella, each component could be organized and managed in the manner best suited to the project in hand. This approach can be seen in Portland, where, under the Metro umbrella, TriMet is building a \$130 million bridge across the Willamette for transit, bikes and pedestrians, while Multnomah County is replacing the Sellwood Bridge further upstream.

At the CRC, such an approach might include some permutation of

- 1) Making the deferred seismic and safety improvements to the existing I-5 bridge, generally as envisaged in the DEIS.
- 2) Some kind of local traffic and transit bridge to relieve I-5 of local traffic conflicts, and improve transit capacity and reliability,
- 3) Work at the railroad bridge, including a new lift span, which will eliminate the need for I-5 bridge lifts, and eventually a new railroad bridge that might also include truck lanes to serve the Ports.

I find it striking that so many citizens have volunteered to take time from their busy schedules to testify against this disastrous project. We look to this committee to call a halt to the present hemorrhaging of public funds, and to establish new direction that will lead to a more appropriate and successful conclusion.