

Testimony of Ron Schmidt Chair of HINooN to the Joint Committee on Transportation re I5 Bridge replacement February 11, 2013

Good Afternoon, I am Ron Schmidt and I am a 26 year resident of Hayden Island and of Jantzen Beach Moorage which is the neighborhood most impacted by the I5 bridge project with 30 homes to be displaced. I am an active member of the North Portland Neighborhood Chairs Network and I am the Chair of the City of Portland authorized neighborhood association, the Hayden Island Neighborhood Network, known as HINooN.

The I5 bridge is the only way for our over 2000 residents to get home and for thousands of employees and thousands of customers to the businesses on our island whether it be by bike, bus, boot leather or buggy so when I5 stops, our lives do too. Portland police get delayed trying to get to us when traffic stalls or stops, neither ambulances nor backup fire trucks can. We have no hospital nor medical facilities on the island. Not only do we support the I5 bridge replacement, our lives depend on it. **Please build the bridge.**

As this project is being delayed, we have families and businesses who don't know when they will become condemned but live in constant fear if and when they will. We have businesses and families unwilling to invest or build in our community because of the uncertainty and we fear the crime that has struck our island and the degradation of the properties surrounding the bridge is in part from the delays in the project. Our state and our region suffer economic and environmental damage from the transportation blockage that has existed for years. **Please build the Bridge now.**

Our citizens, our local neighborhood associations and our CRC#COR Citizens Oversight Review have been heavily involved in the planning and design review of the bridge replacement for over a decade closely with City, Metro, Odot, WSDot and CRC planners and staff. We have a unique perspective of the implications of plan design and a vested interest for a great plan design. **We support the \$450 million project plan.** We hope to continue to work together with the CRC and others and we ask to continue to have a place at the project development table. **Please build the Bridge right.**

We envision the I5 bridge and Hayden Island to be a special entrance into our wonderful state of Oregon that is welcoming and attractive, an indication of the wonders a visitor will soon see. For the citizens and businesses of the entire State of Oregon, **Let's BUILD THE BRIDGE, LET'S BUILD IT NOW AND LET'S BUILD IT RIGHT!**

Thank you.