

February 11, 2013

Testimony

To: The Joint Committee on the Interstate-5 Bridge Replacement Project

From: Maryhelen Kincaid, Chair, East Columbia Neighborhood

My name is Maryhelen Kincaid and I am the chair of East Columbia Neighborhood, which borders I-5 on the west and the Columbia River on the North. I am a member of the North Portland Neighborhood Chairs group which represents 11 neighborhoods in North and NE Portland.

My East Columbia neighbors and I live in the footprint of the CRC project, and as such, are heavily impacted by traffic on and near I-5. We are one of the three most impacted neighborhoods. We suffer from traffic delays, congestion and the related health impacts of emissions and noise. Daily backups cause traffic to divert through our neighborhoods. Most days we can't get home after 3pm without taking alternate routes. Services and deliveries are often delayed because of mid to late afternoon I-5 congestion. As others testify before you today ask them where they live and how their daily lives are impacted by the backups on I-5 at the Columbia River. I know you will hear many reasons why you should support, or not support HB2800, but I urge you to carefully consider the voices and support of those 5,000+ citizens who live in the 3 neighborhoods most impacted by the project.

We support Oregon's \$450 million investment in the CRC project. It is time the state moves forward on a project to alleviate traffic problems, long identified and experienced daily by my neighbors, the local businesses, and anyone travelling I-5 at the Columbia River.

We want to participate in the process of getting this bridge built. We want to continue our collaborative work with all stakeholders. Our group of neighborhood representatives have consistently provided insightful and thoughtful input, and built trust with all stakeholders. Our contributions can help the CRC staff and contractors make this project a model for utilizing community engagement in the development of a massive infrastructure project.

While you cannot undo any past actions, you can hold people accountable for future outcomes, and for tracking and managing everything that comes their way. This is your opportunity to do the right thing for the State of Oregon by supporting funding for this project while demanding it be fiscally responsible, and protect local connectivity with the least amount of impacts for those citizens and businesses living in the shadow of the bridge.

This is your opportunity to do something great, not only for my neighborhood, but for the State of Oregon. It is time to commit to the project and the time is now.

I would like to close with a quote from John F. Kennedy: There are risks and costs to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction.

Thank you for your time.