

## Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2800, Columbia River Crossing

To: Members of the Committee

There are so many reasons for the Members of this Hearing Committee to reject consideration of this House Bill, it is hard to know where to start. First and foremost, it should be apparent by now to the members of the Committee that

1. Oregon is approaching bankruptcy, and the feasibility studies have already soaked up over \$100 million with nothing to show for this expenditure
2. The United States already has a national debt of \$17 trillion, and counting, in case asking a few more \$Billion from the Federal Treasury is being considered
3. Cost estimates by Government have a way of NEVER being even close
4. Aside from these staggering numbers, no proposal has yet been forwarded, other than to soak the taxpayers of Oregon first, and then all other American taxpayers, to pay for this beaucroatic pipe dream
5. I understand that the taxpayers of Clark County have no desire for this "crossing", for a host of reasons, increased taxation being only one.

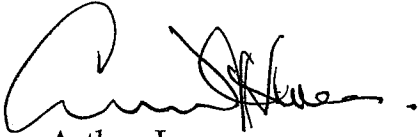
The staggering cost estimates to all of us as taxpayers are only a part of the reason to call a halt to further pursuing this publicly funded "crossing". At present, there are two main bridges over the Columbia. The older I-5 bridge is frequently a bottleneck, with three lanes narrowing down to two on approach to the bridge from the South, then with three lanes over the bridge. The two lane stretch is, naturally, the primary cause of every rush hour back-up, and the even the heaviest traffic congestion generally clears by the time the bridge is approached. I lived in Clark County for a number of years, till recently, and generally always preferred to cross on the multilane I-205, and have no recollection of a traffic standstill due to traffic volume on that crossing. I presume the headaches associated with crossing the Columbia, particularly at "rush hour" on the I-5 have provided the impetus for the perceived need for a third crossing route.

I suspect, however, that there may be more sinister motives afoot. From what I understand, any third "crossing" would largely focus on non traditional uses, from walking and bicycle lanes, to all manner of light rail transport, and to date, I have seen little evidence of accomodation for motorized transport. There may be a desire by some to save us from destroying our planet's environment by getting us out of our cars and into stuffy, uncomfortable tube trains, or by forcing us onto our bicycles. This may save us from guilt over burning fossil fuels, but will ruin us financially in the process. Far better if we were to leave the decision for an unfettered third crossing to the risk/reward structure of a private entity, if any is interested

When the time does come for a true need for a third Columbia River "crossing", let it be

at a time when we are in better financial shape than we are at present, and let us consider ALL options, including private enterprise, or even improving approach access to existing crossings.

Yes, traffic in Portland is always heavy, but is always heavy no matter where you are, and the I-5 bridge is just one area. I hate driving in Portland for that reason. A bypassing arterial would probably be beneficial, but I urge the members of the Committee to consider this. Don't you think we're taxed enough already ?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arthur Innes', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Arthur Innes  
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