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Subject: Testimony to the Interstate-5 Bridge Replacement Project Joint Legislative Committee February 18, 2013

Per a recent Metro study, 80% of the trips in the Portland area are made by automobile. Indirectly, people are voting with their cars. That coincides with the need for a new high capacity I-5 Columbia River Crossing that can reduce congestion and keep interstate commerce in the corridor flowing. There are however some serious concerns about the financial plan.

Small businesses are the backbone of Oregon's economy. Under the present tolling scenario, low and middle income commuters using the I-5 crossing will have little if any discretionary money left in their pockets to support these businesses. Highway users who have 8 to 5 jobs will face discrimination with the assault of congestion pricing. Likewise, all highway users face discrimination in that transit users and bicyclists will be allowed to freeload – both as it applies to paying for the mode specific infrastructure being built, and as it applies to paying for a proportional share of the collective bridge superstructure.

Additionally, the higher the highway tolls on the I-5 crossing, the more traffic will divert to the I-205 crossing. A 5% diversion equates to approximately 6000 daily vehicles that will likely have an impact on I-84, Sandy Boulevard (which is a high crash corridor), and other parallel city streets. The additional traffic will also have an impact on the quality of life for Northeast Portland residents that are in the path of this additional traffic.

Moreover, there are several reality check questions that need to be answered before any funding bill is passed through. Given the high price tag for the light rail component of this project that includes an ongoing operational subsidy, and given the small percentage of users compared to those utilizing the highway; is the light rail component truly cost effective, or is it just a fantasy part of a costly social engineering agenda? What is the price tag for the super-sized, separated bicycle deck on the bridge and the surplus of connecting bicycle infrastructure that has been tacked on to this project? So far these costs have been concealed with nobody able to supply even a ballpark figure. Where is the transparency and oversight when spending millions on bicycle infrastructure?

President Obama emphasized in his State of the Union address that everybody needs to pay their fair share of taxes. The sacrifice must be shared. The burden of paying for a new CRC must be placed on a broad based scale that includes the users of all modes of transport sharing the expense. To apply equity and justice to the funding plan, transit passengers need to be assessed a fare surcharge for traversing the crossing, and bicyclists need to pay a toll. The \$450 million the state is expected to pony up also must come from the users of all transport modes, not just from motorist paid taxes and fees.

Unlike former Mayor Sam Adams who just about bankrupted the City of Portland with social engineering, pet projects, bicycle and special interest agendas; and unlike TriMet GM Neil McFarlane who is on a similar course to bankrupt TriMet; this committee must reverse direction by not accepting extreme, exorbitant highway tolls and congestion pricing that will bankrupt commuters – instead requiring smaller minimal charges applicable to the users of all modes on the crossing. The people who regularly drive across the Columbia need to have some discretionary funds in their pockets to keep the local economy moving forward.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Parker, Northeast Portland

(see reverse)

Existing "proposed" funding plan for the Columbia River Crossing project.

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Notes</u>
\$850-\$938M	FTA New Starts funding from The Federal Highway Trust Fund*	100% of the funding for light rail – the local match is the highway portion of the project
\$400M	Projects of National & Regional Significance from The Federal Highway Trust Fund*	
\$450M	ODOT – Gas Taxes and other roadway user fees	
\$450M	WSDOT – Gas taxes and other roadway user fees	
\$1.3 Billion (est)	Highway user tolls on the crossing	Electronic – including a commission paid to a contractor to collect the tolls & congestion pricing to manage/ration highway usage
\$0	Light Rail and other transit users	Fares cover only about 25% of the operating costs & therefore must be subsidized
\$0	Bicyclists	The project will include a separated, super-sized bicycle path on the crossing and a considerable amount of connecting specialized bicycle infrastructure on both sides of the river.

* The Federal Highway Trust Fund is supported by the federal tax on roadway motor fuels (gas & diesel taxes)

CRC construction cost breakdown (who pays)

Transit users: 0

Bicyclists: 0

Highway users: 100% of the entire project

Other Notes:

Europe's per capita GDP in 2004 was about the same as the US in 1982. Due to anti-mobility taxes, European mobility is more than 50 years behind the US. Per capita auto, bus & rail travel in 2004 were similarly the same as the US in early 1950s. Given the relationship between mobility and incomes, this lack of mobility is likely a major reason why European incomes are over all lower than in the US. History clearly demonstrates higher rates of personal mobility significantly contributes to greater economic productivity which in turn generates more family wage and better paying jobs.