

Hello Representatives, and Senators,

My name is Paul Cone, and I live in Northeast Portland. I was born in the Portland area, and have lived there most of my life. I am not an engineer, but I am the grandson of one. My grandfather worked in the Kaiser Shipyards in Vancouver World War II, and then later worked as an engineer up on the hill at ~~what is now known as OHSU~~ ^{the Veteran's Hospital}. During my childhood he as well as my father instilled a curiosity in me in some of the great construction projects of the Northwest. I remember going with my grandpa on a drive and taking a look at the construction of the second powerhouse of the Bonneville Dam, and then later going with my father going down into that dam after it was built, where you could feel the power of the mighty Columbia River rumbling through the turbines that now help to power the lights in this room. It is an amazing thing, these giant projects of the West that we have constructed. And these projects have often provided a boost to our economy, in concert with working to keep the Pacific Northwest as beautiful and clean as possible. It is because of the hydroelectric dams on the Columbia and our other rivers that we have fewer electric power plants burning coal and polluting our air, unlike elsewhere throughout the country. So my grandfather instilled in me a good appreciation of building great things to serve the common good.

Later on my parents divorced and my mother moved to Houston, Texas. I still spent summers in Oregon but the rest of the year I was thrust into a completely different world of getting around. To go pretty much anywhere

in Texas, you get on a freeway. I don't know how many of you have *been* to Texas, but Oregon could build all the freeways it wanted for the next 100 years and Texas would still have more freeways under construction.

Whenever I go and visit mom I am amazed that they've found room for yet another freeway. A booming economy, population, and little in the way of carefully planned land use like we have here in Oregon has allowed for 30 lane freeways -- it is freeways, freeways, freeways, everywhere, and always under construction (and we all know what freeway construction means -- more slowed traffic). And even after all of that, Houston still has some of the worst traffic and the worst automobile air pollution in the country.

Now I am a geographer and I work for the City of Portland making maps for transportation. I am not a transportation planner or an engineer, but I work with them, and I see all of their projects. I am not an official representative of the government today, but I can tell you that as employees working for the public good, many of us working in transportation are very concerned about the sad state of funding for transportation projects in our region, and that we are potentially moving forward on a project that will dramatically change the north part of our city, not only with increased traffic, but also with the increased pollution that will come from it. If you build it, it will come. Every transportation engineer worth his salt will tell you that building more lanes will bring more traffic. Period.

So I ask you to make sure you do this right. I am all for good construction

projects, but remember that this is not just about jobs for the next five years for this *one* gargantuan project, which is far beyond anything Oregon has ever seen -- it is about the roads and bridges *all over* our state, many of which will not be built if we spend all our money in one place. There are transportation projects -- and jobs -- in *each* of your districts that I am sure will be delayed or simply canceled if we spent it all on a giant freeway project in Portland. The solution for crossing the Columbia -- and this is not the only solution, there are others, such as the Common Sense Alternative, that can serve the same purpose and would be more appropriately engineered -- the solution should be about keeping Portland and Oregon that carefully considered and planned and beautiful state we all know and love -- and not like Houston and Texas, land of freeways and dirty air.

Thank you.

Paul Cone