

## Bob Levy Testimony on HB 4113

Good afternoon, I am Bob Levy from Windy River Farms in Stanfield, Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on HB 4113.

Our operation and related entities along with many other agricultural producers in Oregon spend a lot of time tracking agriculture trends in weather, markets, and pricing to help our businesses be competitive in the national and international market place. Oregon producers are truly in a competitive market. Moving our products to market through a complicated transportation system requires continual monitoring and evaluation for least cost alternatives. All private business is based on some level of certainty, transportation problems on I5, Interstate 84 Highway 97 can and do create uncertainty. Choke points and congestion in the transportation system impacts our cost to effectively reach markets and deliver products. Addressing our transportation issues is something we need legislative leadership to do.

Many of the commodities and products coming out of Eastern Oregon must go through Portland on its way to the markets where they are sold. We prefer to ship through the Port of Portland, but in some cases, some overseas destinations are not served out of Portland and so we depend on I-5 to move our products north to Seattle/Tacoma.

Reliable traffic flow is critical so we can count on the time it takes to get to destinations. Our trucks cost are specific dollar amount to operate each day. Fuel, although expensive, is only one component of the cost. Products from related entities moving from the Salem area need to be able to count on 2 or 3 trips a day to Seattle/Tacoma, traffic issues can double the cost if we are reduced to one trip a day. Trucks from east part of the state can run into driver time limits if they hit traffic problems.

The current Interstate Bridge is the only red light on the entire I-5 corridor from Canada to Baja. The bottlenecks and bridge lift delays on the bridge can cause a significant increase in costs to our agricultural shipments and translate directly to impacts to our bottom-line. This in turn means fewer jobs for the state; in particular to the rural communities.

The highway and transit improvements in the Oregon-led option will save travelers about 6.8 million hours per year in reduced auto and truck delays and will improve safety. On average, one collision per day occurs in the project area, a rate that is nearly double that of similar urban highways. For Oregon agriculture, improvements in that corridor means a significant cost savings to our industries that can be re-invested in Oregon.

A robust, well-maintained transportation system is key for agriculture to make a strong and steady contribution to Oregon's economy, bringing and keeping dollars in our state for our coffers. The I-5 replacement project is ready to be built now. I hope you will see fit to move legislation forward authorizing Oregon's \$450 million during this short session. We need to get this project done so we can work on other components of the transportation system like I-84.

Thank you for your time.