



April 10, 2015

Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
SB 668: Relating to construction of facilities along public roads

Clackamas County supports SB 668: The Board of County Commissioners supports SB 668, which provides counties the ability to charge utilities for the right and privilege to construct, maintain or operate water, gas, electric or communication service, fixture or other facility along county roads. Current state law requires this service to be provided free of charge.

Clackamas County spends approximately \$250,000 per year issuing permits and inspecting utility work within our roadways. This work is necessary to protect the public's investment in their roads by ensuring that utilities safely repair the damage they cause to roads. The process is similar when a private developer needs to work within county roads, yet state law allows counties to charge developers for permits and inspections. SB 668 extends this to utilities.

The county understands the importance of allowing utilities to operate within our road right of way – the County supports this service. Presently, these repairs are paid for using scarce gas tax funds. By allowing utilities to be charged for right of way services, SB 668 encourages utility ratepayers, who benefit from the utility, to pay the full bill to fix the roads as a result of utility use. Clackamas County believes this is a reasonable request of utility companies, and it will allow for better, strategic uses of valuable gas tax dollars for road maintenance.

We urge a “yes” vote on SB 668.

Please contact Chris Lyons at clyons@clackamas.us for more information.