



Support for HB 5030

May 15, 2015

KNAPPA OFFICE

42894
OLD HWY. 30
ASTORIA
OREGON
97103

OFFICE
(503)
458-6671

FAX
(503)
458-6106

RAINIER OFFICE

29191
DIKE ROAD
RAINIER
OREGON
97048

OFFICE
(503)
556-0410

FAX
(503)
556-2805

**WWW.
TEEVIN BROS.
COM**

I am here today requesting this Committee fully fund *ConnectOregon* legislation and if possible, increase funding to this innovative and nationally heralded program. I have stated before and I stand by my words, "ConnectOregon is one of the finest examples of good governance."

In the past you have been regaled with true stories of a *ConnectOregon* rail project outside Hermiston that improves fluidity of rail traffic in the Portland area. Or the story of a private/public partnership that rebuilt a railroad bridge in the valley that decreased passenger rail transit time by 30 minutes between Eugene and Portland, while increasing freight mobility in the corridor by 50%. In a *ConnectOregon* grant in 2010, my company added 70 new jobs in a rural Oregon community where unemployment was running over 10%. Similar stories emerge from Lakeview, Ontario, Medford and Coos Bay. *ConnectOregon* works and it works very well.

Your original intent with *ConnectOregon* was to improve freight and passenger mobility in transportation modes that did not qualify for gas tax funding. Not only did *ConnectOregon* accomplish that feat, it also became an economic stimulator for all regions of Oregon. I dare say of the many economic stimulus plans undertaken since 2008, *ConnectOregon* is perhaps one of the most successful because it is making permanent improvements to Oregon's infrastructure. Through *ConnectOregon*, Oregon is positioning herself for decades of continued economic growth.

There are some critical of the program. Too often they read the headline and the first two sentences of an article and pass judgement on the entire program. Others fail to see the benefits of private/public partnerships or believe government cannot do anything right.

In the past decade since *ConnectOregon* became law, this august body has tweaked performance metrics, adding more accountability to the program. ODOT staff administering the program has always erred to the conservative side. ODOT has enlisted subject matter experts in each mode to bring real-world experience to the selection process. ODOT staff has faithfully upheld the tenants of *ConnectOregon* and should be commended for their impartiality, professionalism and dedication to duty.

In the 12th century, Jewish rabbi, physician and philosopher Moshe ben Maimonides stated, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." A *ConnectOregon* corollary can be made with the benefits of building the economy through infrastructure that will work for years.

Please reflect back on the overwhelming successes of *ConnectOregon* and rededicate funding to make transportation infrastructure improvements that will build our future. If there are concerns about the program, have ODOT convene the subject matter experts and use their input for tweaks to accountability and project selection. Know for certain a robust *ConnectOregon* will be paying dividends far after the debt is retired.

Sincerely,

Paul Langner
Facilities Manager, Teevin Bros.