

Testimony of Darlene Hooley

Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

SB 256

June 14, 2017

Co-Chairs Johnson and Gomberg and Members of the Sub Committee,

I am Darlene Hooley and I have been working to repair and reopen the Locks for quite some time...first as a West Linn City Councilor, then as a Clackamas County Commissioner and also securing earmarks as a member of Congress. Today I am representing Clackamas County and the Willamette Falls Locks Working Group.

The Willamette Falls and the surrounding area are a unique and special place in Oregon and the Locks are a treasure that we can not afford to lose. The tribal traditions and culture at Willamette Falls and the history of the Locks are reasons enough to maintain the Locks for future generations. The Locks are an engineering marvel, the oldest and most intact canal and leaf gate locks in the nation, and are a primary historic asset for the region.

Yet the Locks will continue to be a vibrant part of our future. The Locks will be used by our citizens for recreation and boating, so that the Willamette River can once again be ONE river, not a river cut in half. When considered together with the Legacy project and the public access to the Falls, the Locks will be part of the

region's world-wide tourism draw. The Locks will be used by our local businesses to move goods and products. You have testimony from Wilsonville Concrete, which is one example of the potential a functional Locks can provide. This is a "green" way to transport goods. The Locks can be used as a critical transportation route in the event of a catastrophic event and the list goes on. But I know your time is limited this afternoon.

The Locks no longer have enough benefit at the national level for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps intends to dispose of the Locks. Our choice as a region and State is to work with the Corps and advocate for a transfer of the Locks in an acceptable condition **or** to sit by while the Corps constructs a concrete bulkhead above the Locks, which would close the facility to future generations.

We appreciate the leadership of Governor Roberts as the Convener of the State Task Force and its recommendation to create a State Commission, which is before you today in Senate Bill 256. Local governments, advocates and businesses have been collaborating and pushing to preserve the Locks through the Willamette Falls Locks Working Group under the leadership of co-Chair Commissioner Schrader. The Working Group supports the Dash 3 Amendment to create a broad and inclusive membership for a formal Commission to represent our citizens in determining the future for the Locks.

Thank you to Senator Devlin and his legislative assistant Morgan Gratz-Weiser for all their work on the -3 Amendments. Thank you to the many legislators who have been supporting the Locks and all the sponsors of SB 256.

We have a window of opportunity to preserve the Locks for its cultural and historic legacy **AND** for the economic, transportation and recreational opportunities for our future. Thank you for your support of the Dash 3 Amendment and Senate Bill 256.