



MARK MEEK
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 40

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DATE: February 15, 2017
TO: Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
FROM: Representative Mark Meek
SUBJECT: SB 256, Willamette Falls Commission

Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee:

As Vice-Chair of the House Transportation Policy Committee, the opportunity to reopen the Locks for commerce would relieve congestion on our roads. Many people don't know that West Linn Paper Company is adjacent to the Locks and is the oldest active paper mill in the Western United States, with good-paying jobs.

West Linn and other businesses have expressed interest in using the river for transporting goods, but the Locks would need to be reopened with reliability for these businesses to switch to the river for transporting goods. The Locks are also a potential transportation route after an earthquake or catastrophic event if they are repaired with seismic upgrades.

The Locks do not neatly fit under the jurisdiction of a single state agency or department. The Commission is needed to bring together State Parks, ODOT, the Marine Board and Business Oregon to join with tribal, regional and local governments, businesses and advocates to develop solutions for the repair and continued operations of the Locks.

Respectfully,

Mark Meek

