

Joint Oregon-Washington Legislative Action Committee

On November 18, 2019, the following was announced by Governors Kate Brown and Jay Inslee:

**Oregon – Washington**

**Memorandum of Intent**

**on**

**Replacing the I-5 Bridge over the Columbia River**

*“Whereas the current I-5 bridge is a **major seismic risk** and traffic bottleneck for the region and the entire nation;*

*Additionally, in reevaluating the project scope, the project office shall assume any plan for a **new bridge** will include **high capacity transit.**”*

The above announcement should read a “**new river crossing**”. A new immersed tube tunnel would be more seismic-resistant, provide a flexible transit design, and cost less than a new bridge.

In 1989 when the Loma Prieta earthquake collapsed the San Francisco’s Bay Bridge, BART’s immersed tube tunnels remained in service.

In 1959 British Columbia built the George Massey Fraser River immersed tube tunnel. In 2006 this tunnel was retrofitted to withstand a 275-year earthquake.

British Columbia plans to build a new immersed tube tunnel with six vehicle lanes and two for transit under the Fraser River. Both the Fraser River Crossing and the Columbia River Crossing are shallow crossings with soil conditions that will liquefy in an earthquake. An immersed tube tunnel is a more seismic-resistant and economic alternative to a new bridge.

Please study the attached PDF.

Hope to attend the December 10 meeting.

Best  
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