

Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair
Representative Caddy McKeown, Co-Chair
Joint Transportation Committee

Re: Support for HB 3209

Dear Co-Chair Beyer, Co-Chair McKeown and Members of the Committee,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium (MMC) represents the mayors of twenty-five cities in the Portland Metro Area, collectively home to over 1.7 million Oregonians. The MMC writes to express its strong support for HB 3209, which would authorize general obligation bonds to fund the I-205: Stafford Road to OR 213 Project. This project would address one of the most significant bottlenecks in the Portland Metro Area and is crucial to the transportation infrastructure and economic vitality of our entire state.

The residents of every MMC city are impacted by congestion on I-205 regardless of whether it is part of their daily commute. In 2017, the Legislature identified the I-205 bottleneck between Stafford Road and OR 213 as a priority congestion relief project for the state because it impedes the movement of people and good across the region. I-205 connects commuters and businesses to the Portland International Airport, the State of Washington and many of the cities where we serve as mayors. Relieving the persistent congestion along this route is vital to the economy of not only the Portland Metro Area, but to the economy of Oregon.

The I-205 Project is also important for the safety of our cities' residents. The Abernathy Bridge is not seismically sound enough to withstand a major earthquake, and neither are eight other bridges in the project area. Part of the project funding will go to seismic upgrades for these bridges that our residents use every day.

ODOT has already invested \$53.7 million for the planning and design of the I-205 project, and it is expected to be shovel-ready in early 2020 at a cost of \$460 million. Unfortunately, under current plans, construction will be delayed until 2026 at the earliest due to a lack of funding. Each year that we wait, the estimated project cost increases by \$15 million. As the mayors of many of the Portland Metro Area cities that are negatively impacted by the significant congestion problem on I-205, we urge the Oregon Legislature to fund this vital transportation infrastructure upgrade in the 2019 legislative session. Our communities cannot afford to wait another seven years for these economic, safety and quality of life issues to be addressed.

Sincerely,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium

Mayor Denny Doyle
City of Beaverton

Mayor Brian Hodson
City of Canby

Mayor Jeffrey Dalin
City of Cornelius

Mayor Gery Schirado
City of Durham

Mayor Brian Cooper
City of Fairview

Mayor Peter Truax
City of Forest Grove

Mayor Shane Bemis
City of Gresham

Mayor Tom Ellis
City of Happy Valley

Mayor Steve Callaway
City of Hillsboro

Mayor Ken Gibson
City of King City

Mayor Kent Studebaker
City of Lake Oswego

Mayor Mark Hardie
City of Maywood Park

Mayor Mark Gamba
City of Milwaukie

Mayor Teri Lenahan
City of North Plains

Mayor Dan Holladay
City of Oregon City

Mayor Ted Wheeler
City of Portland

Mayor Walt Williams
City of Rivergrove

Mayor Keith Mays
City of Sherwood

Mayor Jason Snider
City of Tigard

Mayor Casey Ryan
City of Troutdale

Mayor Frank Bubenik
City of Tualatin

Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle
City of Vancouver (ex officio)

Mayor Russ Axelrod
City of West Linn

Mayor Tim Knapp
City of Wilsonville

Mayor Scott Harden
City of Wood Village