



LAND & TIMBER CO.

May 20, 2019

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**WWW.
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Re: Senate Bill 59

Dear Co-Chairs and members of the committee:

As a member of the Oregon Rail Users League (ORULE) and an Oregon-based shipper, moving commodities from more than 60 Oregon businesses, from 28 counties, employing thousands of Oregonians, I strongly urge this committee to authorize lottery bonding to fund a competitive *ConnectOregon* program for the upcoming biennium.

ConnectOregon's success is its embracing multi-modal transportation. And while doing so, also strengthening and diversifying Oregon's economy, both in rural and urban communities. The fully-funded, competitive *ConnectOregon* process has resulted in the best projects moving forward across the state.

ConnectOregon has funded critical inter-modal connections that improve capacity, velocity and reliability of alternatives to trucking. The benefits of past *ConnectOregon* projects are enjoyed statewide, benefitting rural areas as well as the I-5 corridor.

ConnectOregon has moved up capital improvement projects for the Class – 1 railroads that have benefitted freight and passenger rail. Efficiencies in rail capacity in Hermiston have decreased rail congestion in Portland. Oregon's short-line railroads, critical to service the first and last mile, now have the ability to handle most any rail car cargo originating anywhere on the continent. Those investments allow steel products from Ohio and Tennessee, cement products from Monterrey, Mexico, landscaping products from New Hampshire, pipe products from Louisiana, to move directly to Oregon marine terminals, with no intervention by truck.

A fully funded, competitive *ConnectOregon* will continue the legacy of investment in Oregon's infrastructure that builds capacity and reliability. When the inevitable Cascadia-event occurs, it will be rail and marine first back on-line and supporting the recovery.

Lastly, the multiplier effect of *ConnectOregon* must be acknowledged. When transportation systems are strong and reliable, the surrounding economy has the ability to pivot to new opportunities. Outside investment is attracted to facilities that have more than one method to reach market.

Capitalizing on the strong economy to fully fund *ConnectOregon* will pay dividends now and for future generations.

Paul Langner
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