



mike doke • executive director  
po box 168 • odell, oregon • 97044  
(o) 541.387.4769 • (c) 541.399.3680  
[www.cgfg.org](http://www.cgfg.org) • [cgfg2@hrecn.net](mailto:cgfg2@hrecn.net)

April 21, 2021

Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair  
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair  
Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for Phase 2 of the Hood River/White Salmon Interstate Bridge Replacement Project

Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair Rayfield and Members of the Committee,

Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers is a non-profit tree fruit organization that represents 440 growers and 20 shippers in the Mid-Columbia region of Oregon where more than 225,000 tons of pears, apples and cherries are produced annually.

We are writing to support the Port of Hood River's request to the Oregon Legislature for \$5 million to help fund Phase 2 of the Hood River/White Salmon Interstate Bridge replacement project. The current toll bridge is a critical link for our regional bi-state economy, but it is also functionally obsolete, weight-restricted and seismically deficient.

If construction of the replacement bridge is not underway by 2026, the existing bridge will need \$50 million in repairs and rehabilitation over the next 15 years in order to remain safe and operational. Phase 2 of the bridge replacement needs to begin in 2021 in order to keep the project on schedule.

The Hood River/White Salmon Interstate bridge has regional economic importance, providing for the flow of goods and services between business between the two states. However, narrow travel lanes and the recent reduction in vehicle weight limit from 80,000 pounds to 64,000 pounds jeopardizes all industries, including fruit haulers.

Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers strongly support the Port of Hood River's efforts to secure \$5 million from Oregon this session. This funding would match a \$5 million federal BUILD grant, \$5 million from Washington state, and \$1.25 million from the Port to fund the \$16.25 million total cost of Phase 2 of this vital project.

Thank you for your attention to this vital project.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Doke", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Doke  
Executive Director  
Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers