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May 7, 2021

Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Capital Construction  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members on the Committee:

We write to you today in strong support of \$5 million in lottery funding for the Port of Hood River to help fund Phase 2 of the Hood River-White Salmon Replacement Bridge Project. This funding will advance design and engineering work that must be completed before this functionally obsolete but critical rural transportation link can be replaced.

The current interstate bridge, built in 1924, is no longer able to meet our communities' needs. Its lack of shoulders and narrow travel lanes create a significant bottleneck for traffic and emergency response vehicles during emergency closures of I-84. The bridge's weight restriction was recently lowered to 64,000 lbs, it carries a sufficiency rating of less than 48, and it offers no bicycle or pedestrian access. The bridge is also regarded as the most hazardous obstacle on the federal inland waterway system for marine freight. Perhaps most importantly, the bridge is not seismically resilient—an earthquake would sever this vital transportation link for the surrounding communities; the two nearest crossings over the Columbia are both over 20 miles away in either direction.

A \$5 million investment from the Oregon Legislature would match a \$5 million federal BUILD grant, \$5 million from the Washington State Legislature (confirmed), and \$1.25 million from the Port of Hood River to fund the \$16.25 million total cost of Phase 2. We urge you to support this essential piece of transportation infrastructure in our districts.

Sincerely,

Chuck Thomsen  
Oregon State Senator, SD 26

Anna Williams  
Oregon State Representative, HD 52