

Hello,

Please accept the below as my testimony for the June 4, 2024 Public Hearing on Transportation.

To the Joint Committee on Transportation,

I am a current resident of the St. Johns Neighborhood. I have lived in this area for the past seven years, during which I have commuted to my job as a critical employee at Oregon Health & Science University on Marquam Hill. In the event of a city disaster, including the predicted Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake, I will be expected and required to be able to get to work to help the citizens of Portland. Current predictions show this will become impossible as I am likely to be stranded with the rest of my community, unable to leave to provide care.

The North Peninsula is in dire need of funding for emergency preparedness routes and structural improvements to ensure the safety of the residents and the movement of emergency vehicles and critically essential employees and services. We are at risk of having 75% of our surroundings liquified and inaccessible, with our primary exit point bridge collapsed, effectively isolating over 30,000 residents from moving to safety or being able to receive aid. Entire communities are also at severe risk of adverse health events from the toxic substances that will be released by the destruction of storage tanks along the river.

As you create your transportation package, please prioritize the budgeting of funding that would help to conduct feasibility studies and find solutions to maintain connection of the peninsula to emergent aid, as well as the ability to safely evacuate in the event of toxic spillage/overflow. This interdepartmental work is critical and necessary and I ask that you allocate the funding necessary to complete it. The work will take time and needs to begin now, as tens of thousands of lives will remain at risk until it is completed.

Respectfully,
Elizabeth Levins

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