

Learned a moment ago that there was a visit to Eugene today by the Joint Committee on Transportation, so missed the opportunity to share my concerns with the Committee while here. Thus, I am sending my thoughts via email.

Eugene's only hospital, Sacred Heart Medical Center, was operated by PeaceHealth. This entity, over 10 years ago, built a new hospital across I-5 and the Willamette River in the adjacent city of Springfield. Then, a bit over a year ago, PeaceHealth decided to close Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, including the town's only Emergency Department (ED). Eugene residents requiring hospitalization or ED care are now required to travel across I-5 and the Willamette River to receive care at either PeaceHealth's new hospital (PeaceHealth Riverbend) or Springfield's McKenzie Willamette Hospital.

In the event of the Cascadia Subduction Zone event, which could now happen at any time, it is likely that the bridges and overpasses that connect us to Springfield and healthcare will fail. I have been told that none are seismically upgraded.

A further complication is this that Eugene itself is also divided into North and South areas by the Willamette. So simply seismically upgrading one bridge or overpass will not guarantee lifesaving healthcare to the entire community.

I urge the Committee to carefully consider this information as you deliberate funding allocations. This can impact not only Eugene residents but other Lane County residents as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

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