

Submitter: Kathleen Hadley  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure: HB2137

Chair Gorsek and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

My name is Kathy Freeborn Hadley, and I support the proposed HB 2137. I have been a resident of Polk County almost my entire life (aside from college years at OSU), and I can strongly attest to the need for an additional crossing somewhere in the Salem region over the Willamette River. My family is involved in production agriculture, myself currently helping run our farm, and many of our products must reach the ports in Portland and beyond to travel to their international destinations. Having only one path to accommodate freight in our area creates delays during traffic incidents, and uncertainty when looking ahead considering emergency preparedness & our lack of options if the existing bridges fail for any reason. Also, I married into a family farm near Silverton, which my husband and I now operate, and the logistics of getting back and forth across the river daily have been quite the headache through the years.

On a personal note, my Dad suffered a massive heart attack several years ago. Being in a rural area of Polk County, we made a quick decision to drive him immediately to the Salem Hospital ER, deciding we could have him there as quickly as an ambulance would get to us. Thankfully, the day of the week and time of day were favorable, and no traffic incidents had happened, so he was at the ER being attended to within 15 minutes. But that could easily NOT have been the case, and could have changed the outcome for my Dad. Yes, we have a regional hospital in Dallas; yes, paramedics could have been available for initial care; but for the life saving surgery my Dad required, Salem was where he needed to be. Reliable access across that river is of the utmost importance to me.

I do not pretend to have answers. I am well aware of logistical concerns regarding placement, associated environmental impacts and studies that will be required, downfalls of additional development that might be encouraged by an additional river crossing, etc. But to continue to kick this looming regional problem down the road just because previous disagreements stalled progress, is wrong. I strongly support Rep. Mannix's bill because we need to keep this conversation moving forward. Thank you for your time.