

Submitter: Blake Goud
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB2098

I support replacing this bridge, but oppose HB 2098 -2, because this legislation as currently written jeopardizes a right-sized Bridge Replacement, right now. I support the forthcoming -3 Amendment (and the policy recommendations offered by the Just Crossing Alliance) that ensures this replacement bridge project moves forward smoothly with explicit pro-labor provisions, finance guardrails, and major investments in mass transit.

As a resident of the Portsmouth neighborhood, the expansion would be significantly detrimental for areas near me without providing commensurate benefit to people who live in the impacted area. It would be great to have a bridge that had a smaller footprint, not a larger one, and more opportunities to bike or use transit to cross to Hayden Island and Vancouver, with a decongestion fee helping to manage traffic volumes on a bridge the same size as we have now.

What is being proposed in terms of funding eliminates these possibilities and puts millstone around the necks of taxpayers and figure policymakers who would be forced to pay off a white elephant project that will be judged as a mistake of historic proportions.

It is a huge red flag that this proposal would borrow the entire payment due using GO bonds instead of revenue bonds. It signals that there is institutional knowledge that revenue bonds with accurate traffic and toll revenue forecasts couldn't be raised.

We're not falling for it! We want our public revenue to be available for future legislatures to appropriate in the ways they see fit, not to bail out a past giveaway to the project developers at ODOT and WSDOT and their construction industry allies.