

Submitter: Anna Cowen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB2098

I support replacing this bridge, but oppose HB 2098 -2 and -4, because this legislation as currently written jeopardizes a right-sized Bridge Replacement, right now. I support the -3 Amendment (and the policy recommendations offered by the Just Crossing Alliance) that ensures this replacement bridge project moves forward smoothly with a right-sized design, explicit pro-labor provisions, financial guardrails, and major investments in mass transit. We need a clean bill focused solely on the replacement of this bridge so we secure immediate federal funding and prepare to hold a statewide conversation about the rest of our transportation system in future years.

I'm concerned that HB 2098 uses General Fund resources to pay for a new bridge instead of bonding against existing Highway Trust Fund dollars, a maneuver that directly pits this bridge project against other statewide budget priorities like investing in affordable housing or education.

I'm angry that ODOT's projects are seemingly always significantly over budget, and concerned that this bloated freeway expansion will rob Oregonians of the desperately needed funding for basic maintenance and safety projects on ODOT roads across the state.

I'm frustrated ODOT has billions for freeway expansions but barely a dime for any safety projects while the state is experiencing an epidemic of traffic fatalities, including on streets like SE Powell, SW Hall and TV Highway.

I'm surprised to see that HB 2098's -2 Amendment currently has no language in support of unionized labor-friendly practices including the required establishment of a Project Labor Agreement or Community Benefits Agreement.

I'm concerned about what a freeway expansion means in terms of more cars, more traffic and more air pollution in North and Northeast Portland.

I'm terrified of the climate emergency and frustrated that ODOT wants to spend billions on a freeway that will increase emissions instead of investing in better local and statewide transit options, when 40% of Oregon's carbon emissions come from transportation.

It seems weird to me that ODOT is defiantly disinterested in studying potentially-significantly-cheaper options like a tunnel under the river or a lift-bridge that would

save billions of dollars.

I'm a transit-dependent Oregonian frustrated that the state isn't prioritizing investments in passenger rail, basic bus service, and other ways to get around for the 1 in 4 Oregonians who can't or don't drive.

I'm worried about the state spending \$7 billion dollars on a singular seismic retrofit when ODOT's own studies report that Oregon has over 700 seismically vulnerable bridges across the state that need to be replaced.

I'm baffled that policymakers still don't seem to understand the basic principles of induced demand and seem dead set on spending billions of dollars to learn that adding lanes to freeways only leads to more traffic jams.