



Jessica Vega Pederson
Multnomah County Chair

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May 12, 2023

Subject: HB 3622, Funding support for Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project

Dear Chairs Frederick and McLain, Vice-Chairs Boquist and Boshart-Davis, Members of the Joint Transportation Committee,

We are pleased to submit this letter of support for HB 3622, which would help fund Multnomah County's Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project and other important local bridge projects in our state.

The county's Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project will ensure that our region has at least one downtown bridge we can count on immediately after a devastating Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. This is more than a bridge, this is an investment in a critical link in our region's Emergency Transportation Route system, one that will play a crucial role in saving lives and recovering from the community-wide devastation following the impending natural disaster.

Our aging infrastructure is struggling to keep pace with the transportation needs of our growing community today, and is unequipped to support our community after the major earthquake, which could hit at any time. Our bridges are interconnected and play an integral role in ensuring a reliable and efficient statewide transportation system. Funding our local bridges now is critical to the resiliency and sustainability of our growing and working community.

If funded, the new seismically resilient Burnside Bridge, located in the heart of our state's biggest metropolitan area, will connect our community from east to west and keep our economy moving for the next 100+ years, and provide communities with peace of mind in the event of a major quake. This is a chance to provide better economic viability and community connection in the near term, and be more responsive to the future needs when the earthquake hits.

The benefits of this project will not just be felt after an earthquake. Over the next decade this multi-million-dollar project will infuse \$895 million into our local, state and regional

economy and create 6,200 years of employment - or job-years - with 3,400 job-years in the tri-county area and up to 35% of job-years going to minority, women or emerging new businesses or apprenticeships. In addition to providing employment, a projected \$545M in Gross Regional Product and \$41M in income taxes would be generated from this project to the state's benefit.

Living in Oregon means living your life knowing there is a significant chance of one of the worst natural disasters taking place during your lifetime. But we also understand that there are investments we can make today that will save thousands of lives and potentially billions of dollars after the Cascadia quake. We know that for every \$1 spent pre-disaster, we save \$6 post-disaster. State investment in this project signals that Oregon is ready to proactively address seismic resiliency in our state's most populous region.

Thanks to the support of our city partners, we have been able to invest \$300M in local funding through vehicle registration fees to date. This amounts to one-third of our total project costs. Investing in this project by supporting HB 3622 is a fiscally responsible way to spend Oregon dollars, and it will save many lives and connect people to vital and life saving services pre-and post disaster.

We urge you to pass this bill to support the creation of a seismically resilient Burnside Bridge and address the needs of other important state bridges.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Chair Jessica Vega Pederson



Commissioner Susheela Jayapal, District 2