HOOD RIVER COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chair Witt and members of the House Natural Resources Committee,

The Hood River Chamber County Commerce is strongly in support of HB 3378 and the addition of a Bike/Ped lane to the Bridge of The Gods in Cascade Locks. Outdoor recreation is a strong and growing sector of our local economy in the Columbia River Gorge. The Gorge is truly a mecca for outdoor recreation enthusiasts who visit our area throughout the year to experience world class recreational activities from hiking and biking to snow, water and wind sports.

Adding a Bike/Ped lane to the Bridge of the Gods will complete a missing link in our local recreation infrastructure. The Bridge is currently a part of the Pacific Crest Trail and is the only way for hikers to cross the Columbia River as they travel on the trail. Usage of the trail by hikers has reached an all time high as has vehicular traffic crossing the bridge, leading to increased congestion. The time has come to find a way to allow for safe passage for hikers without fear of sharing the bridge with vehicles.

The Gorge is also a destination for bikers who love to explore the road and trails throughout the area. The state of Oregon and the federal government are currently making a significant investment in building an iconic bike trail that will link Portland with the east end of the Gorge and significantly expand biking opportunities throughout the region. But when the trial is complete there will still not be a safe way for bikers to cross from Oregon into Washington as no bridge in the region is suitable for safely riding.

The Hood River County Chamber believes that adding a Bike/Ped lane to the Bridge of the Gods will be a significant boost to our local economy as it will allow for further growth in recreational tourism and also enhance public safety for hikers and bikers. We strongly support HB 3378 and encourage you to vote the bill out of committee.

Best regards,

Mike Glover, M.S.
President/CEO
Hood River County Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center