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April 17, 2021

Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair
Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair Rayfield and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Port of Hood River Commissioners, I write in support of the Port's request for \$5.0 million in American Rescue Plan funds to continue post-NEPA engineering and planning for the replacement of the Hood River Bridge.

The Hood River Bridge provides critical movement of workers and products between Klickitat and Hood River Counties. Over four million crossing every year bring workers to jobs, products to market and outdoor recreational enthusiasts to the wind sport capital of the world. This part of the Pacific Northwest truly operates as a singular region.

The current bridge is over 80 years-old. A new bridge would eliminate the need for a lift, widen travel lanes, remove weight restrictions, properly treat stormwater, provide safer passage for maritime traffic, and add bike/pedestrian facility. It makes much more sense that money be spent on a new bridge than maintaining an old bridge.

The Port Commission respectfully requests your support for \$5.0 million in state investment to complete engineering, financial and governance studies for bridge replacement. With contributions from Washington state and the federal government, Oregon's investment would be no more than a third of the cost.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael S. McElwee, Executive Director
Port of Hood River

CC: Rep. Tina Kotek, Speaker of the House
Sen. Peter Courtney, Senate President
Sen. Lee Beyer, Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Transportation
Rep. Susan McLain, Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Transportation