



Mayor Robert Burr

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Public Works Director: *Jeff Brown*
Library Director: *Sarah Frost*

May 4, 2021

The Honorable Senator Fred Girod, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Paul Holvey, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
900 Court Street NE, H-178 State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Support for the Bonding Authorization of \$32 million for the Newberg-Dundee Bypass in SB 5534

Co-Chairs Holvey, Girod and Members of the Committee,

As Mayor of the City of Willamina, I strongly support the Newberg-Dundee Bypass. I urge you to explore ways to accelerate completion of this vital project. With four of eleven miles built, we have moved much closer to completion, but we must keep the project moving forward. This Bypass provides a critical link that allows goods to travel from the I-5 Corridor to my small, yet growing City. It provides easier and more convenient access to tourists and visitors who bring vitality to our downtown; and it provides a quicker route for workers to move to and from their places of work to the new homes being planned and built in our community.

Although the first phase of the Bypass has brought improvements it, unfortunately, has also resulted in new congestion points and unintended consequences that will worsen as continued growth in our region puts more demands on this corridor. These issues can be resolved by completing the entire regional Bypass from Rex Hill to Dayton. The longer we wait to build this Bypass, the more expensive it becomes!

As the Mayor of a small, rural community, I fully understand leveraging funds to access even larger grants to complete much-needed infrastructure projects. This is just such a project! We do not want to miss this funding opportunity to leverage the sizeable investments already made by the State and local communities. Thanks to investments made by the Legislature and the Oregon Transportation Commission over the past two years, Phase 2 of the bypass is now shovel ready. This \$32 million in state lottery bond funding will enable ODOT to leverage other funds and move to construction on Phase II of the Bypass while providing a critical state match that can leverage federal dollars to compete construction.

The Newberg-Dundee Bypass is absolutely vital to communities such as Willamina stretching from the Metro area all the way to the Central Coast. Communities such as mine rely on the easy and convenient transport of goods and people, for the economic vitality of our communities and in the critical need to create employment opportunities that provide family wage jobs. I encourage you to make this project a priority and work with our region to identify the funding needed to make this full bypass solution a reality. I appreciate your leadership, and this opportunity to register my support of the completion of the Newberg-Dundee Bypass.

Sincerely,

Robert Burr, Mayor

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