

Submitter: mark johnson

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital  
Construction

Measure: SB5701

February 10, 2022

Chairs Holvey and Girod, and members of the Capital Construction Committee,

The Bridge of the Gods is an extremely important transportation link in the Columbia River Gorge and serves a large portion of Oregon and SW Washington. The bridge is what's known as an Off-System bridge, meaning that it is not a part of either ODOTs or WSDOTs maintenance plans. The bridge is owned and operated by the Port of Cascade Locks, who uses toll revenues to maintain the bridge and keep it in good operating condition. But this 1926 bridge is in need of seismic strengthening in order to remain operational if a significant seismic event should occur as predicted. Tolls cannot provide for this need.

The Port and their bridge engineer have developed a detailed plan for how this strengthening can be accomplished for just \$40 million. This project would be a modest investment when compared to the escalating costs of other bridge replacement projects in the region. The Port is actively working with both Oregon and Washington legislatures to secure \$20 million from each state for the project. With the influx of discretionary revenues available to each state the Port and its regional stakeholders believe that this is an excellent example of a one-time investment that will have a tremendous return for our state and ensure that the Bridge of the Gods can continue to provide safe and efficient transportation for decades to come.

Governor Brown also supports this project and the request, and her staff is assisting the Port with obtaining funding from Washington.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony,

Respectfully,

Mark Johnson  
Government Affairs Director  
Port of Cascade Locks