

Submitter: Jim Scheppke
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB2781

Dear Committee:

In strongly oppose this bill which would be a total waste of time and effort. Taxpayers in Benton and Yamhill Counties would never in 1,000,000 years tax themselves to build a bridge in the "capital city region." They do not consider themselves to be in the "capital city region." What's more, a majority of taxpayers in Polk and Marion Counties would never tax themselves to build another bridge that would like cost \$1 billion or more either. We learned that in the failed Salem River Crossing effort (2006-2019) when supporters of the project refused to talk about how the project would be paid for. Everyone knew it could only be built by tolling the new bridge and the existing bridges and levying a gas tax and a vehicle registration surcharge, none of which would ever fly with Salem residents. So they just didn't talk about it, claiming that there was no financing plan and it would come later in the planning process. Fortunately, a majority of the Salem City Council pulled the plug on the whole fiasco in 2019. They were the adults in the room! There is no FHWA record of decision to build a new bridge. The record of decision is "no build." The EIS planning process would have to start again from scratch. Last time it cost about \$10 million. It was a total waste! Let's not make that mistake again. We need to move on to other mobility solutions that we can afford and that will be consistent with Salem's goal to reach Net Zero by 2050. HB 2781 would move us in the opposite direction.

Jim Scheppke