



# POLK COUNTY

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Administrative Officer

February 1, 2023

To: Joint Committee on Transportation  
Co-Chairs Senator Gorsek and Representative McLain and members of the committee.

I am writing this testimony opposing HB 2781. Though we can understand why the sponsor of the bill believes he can solve concerns about finance methodology through this type of proposal, I would suggest it is a bit of cart before the horse legislation. Further I would point out that once again he is offering this concept without having any conversation with the Polk County Board of Commissioners or any organized collaborative of supporters.

While it is very likely that any serious river crossing project will need multiple funding resources as we have witnessed in prior project work. I can attest as a member of the past Salem River Crossing Oversight Committee, funding was a concern of course, but it was several rungs down our ladder of priority as we were trying to establish siting, design and connectivity across multiple communities in Polk and Marion Counties.

Finally, I would testify that I do not believe we are ready to put forward a property tax method as our first funding idea for major bridge projects in Oregon. I do not believe any local government would lean into that methodology as the primary funding model. We expect ODOT and FHWA as partners will help us find and develop the most effective and palatable funding methods for site specific projects.

Please do not support moving this legislation forward. It is not yet, and may never be needed for our region.

Commissioner Craig Pope