



Marion County

OREGON

Board of Commissioners

February 2, 2023

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Senator Chris Gorsek, Co-Chair
Representative Susan McLain, Co-Chair
Senator Brian Boquist, Co-Vice Chair
Representative Shelly Boshart Davis, Co-Vice Chair

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Colm Willis, Chair
Kevin Cameron
Danielle Bethell

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Jan Fritz

RE: Marion County Supports HB 2137

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Gorsek and Representative McLain and Members of the Committee:

The Marion County Board of Commissioners supports House Bill 2137, which will re-initiate the work conducted on building a third bridge across the Willamette River in or near Salem. HB 2137 will provide decision-makers with relevant and current information to evaluate the construction of a third bridge.

For decades the Salem-Kezer Community has been discussing a third bridge crossing the Willamette River, with many decision-makers providing their input. This new task force will have representation from the localities most affected by a multi-million-dollar infrastructure project: Marion and Polk Counties and those within 30 miles of the River. Additionally, the decades of research previously conducted to develop a third bridge will not be lost, as this task force can pull from the previous work and evaluate it under current circumstances.

Our community constantly suffers traffic overload as the Marion Street and Center Street Bridges are the only arterial passages through Salem to the Oregon Coast. Although some may consider researching the feasibility, financing, locations, and maintenance for a third bridge as moot, Marion County disagrees. Marion county residents overwhelmingly support the construction of a third bridge across the Willamette River. It is needed to relieve the traffic congestion felt by all passing through Salem.

Thank you for your continued work to support our communities. The Marion County Board of Commissioners urges the committee to vote yes on HB 2137.

Sincerely,

Colm Willis
Chair

Kevin Cameron

Danielle Bethell

BOC: JLS