



February 7, 2023

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Member Jurisdictions

- Clark County*
- Skamania County*
- Klickitat County*
- City of Vancouver*
- City of Camas*
- City of Washougal*
- City of Battle Ground*
- City of Ridgefield*
- City of La Center*
- Town of Yacolt*
- City of Stevenson*
- City of North Bonneville*
- City of White Salmon*
- City of Bingen*
- City of Goldendale*
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- Washington DOT*
- Port of Vancouver*
- Port of Camas-Washougal*
- Port of Ridgefield*
- Port of Skamania County*
- Port of Klickitat*
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- Metro*
- Oregon DOT*
- 14th Legislative District*
- 17th Legislative District*
- 18th Legislative District*
- 20th Legislative District*
- 49th Legislative District*

The Honorable Chris Gorsek, Co-Chair
The Honorable Susan McLain, Co-Chair
The Honorable Brian Boquist, Co-Vice Chair
The Honorable Shelly Boshart Davis, Co-Vice Chair

RE: Support Funding for Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge Construction (SB 431)

I am offering the following comments on behalf of the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the state’s designated MPO/RTPO serving the counties of Clark, Skamania and Klickitat. These comments are offered in support of SB 431.

RTC, in collaboration with government agency partners from Klickitat County, has been actively engaged in the planning and outreach involved with the planned replacement of the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge. Replacement of this interstate bridge is the top-ranking unfunded project priority within the RTC’s [Regional Transportation Plan for Klickitat County](#) (November 2018). The project is also identified as a top priority regional transportation investment priority within the 2022-2027 Columbia Gorge Economic Development Strategy.

Over the past several years, Washington and Oregon counterparts have worked diligently to establish a bi-state bridge authority and have secured grant funding to advance project development. Further, Washington state’s Move Ahead Washington transportation funding act committed \$75 Million towards bridge construction. Through this new partnership, we are pleased to witness the development of a truly bi-state project development and governance approach.

RTC affirms this investment is a regional priority as established in numerous long-term plans, and supports the appropriation of \$125 Million in Oregon state funds to enable construction of the Hood River-White Salmon Bridge. As proposed, SB 431 provides an essential investment into the Gorge community infrastructure and economy, enabling a safe and multi-modal bi-state connection, and promoting resiliency and prosperity within the Gorge region for years to come.

Sincerely

Matt Ransom
Executive Director