



March 23, 2023

Senator Gorsek and Representative McLain
Joint Committee on Transportation
900 Court St. NE,
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Gorsek, Chair McClain and Members of the Joint Transportation Committee,

The Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization ([RDPO](#)) supports passage of Oregon House Bill 3323. RDPO is a five-county region spanning Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, and Washington counties in Oregon, and Clark County in Washington and includes Metro, TriMet, and the Port of Portland and many cities within our service area. Our mission is to create a more secure and disaster resilient region.

The Policy Committee, composed of local elected officials from across the region is in unanimous support of HB 3323. RDPO has a unique regional perspective on the risks and preparedness capabilities from our year over year Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and regional investments to improve the region's preparedness and response capabilities to build a more resilient region. The 2022 THIRA Cascadia subduction zone earthquake scenario identified:

- 2,354,781 people across the region will be impacted
- 824,173 people will not have access to potable drinking water
- 941,912 people in the Portland metro region will require food assistance
- 470,956 people will need shelter
- 7,464 people will need medical attention

In 2019-2021 the RDPO and Metro partnered to update the designated [Regional Emergency Transportation Routes](#) (RETRs) for the five-county Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region, which includes Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington counties in Oregon and Clark County in Washington. This project designated 1,204 miles making up 195 routes as emergency transportation routes. This update process added 305 miles making up 89 new routes. Burnside Bridge is critical infrastructure needed to move people and resources in the event of a major earthquake

Building on the Regional Emergency Transportation Routes project, RDPO sponsored a project to study how [to distribute emergency drinking water](#) to households within 48 hours of Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. Findings include:

- Identification of dozens of transportation islands within the Portland Metropolitan region, more than fifteen islands in Multnomah County alone.

- Transportation islands will limit response capability to distribute water immediately following a substantial earthquake.
- Mitigating the number of transportation breaches through upgrading infrastructure resiliency will improve response and save lives.

An earthquake resilient Burnside Bridge ensuring a 19-mile continuous route on both sides of the river will play a vital role in preparing our region and saving lives following a substantial earthquake.

RDPO urges the Joint Transportation Committee to pass HB 3323 to ensure a more prepared and resilient region. For more information, please contact Beth Crane at Elizabeth.crane@portlandoregon.gov or (503) 956-0328.

Thank you for your consideration,

Vancouver Mayor McEnerny-Ogle, and RDPO Policy Committee Chair
Columbia County Commissioner Magruder, and RDPO Policy Committee Vice Chair

