

Testimony of Anneliese Koehler, Legislative Affairs Manager
In Support of House Bill 3323
Joint Committee on Transportation
March 23, 2023



Metro is the elected regional government that serves nearly 1.7 million people in the 24 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area. We provide a broad range of public services that includes land use and transportation planning, solid waste and recycling operations, management of parks and natural areas, housing and homeless services, and operation of major visitor facilities like the Oregon Convention Center, the Portland Expo Center and the Oregon Zoo.

Metro supports HB 3323 which provides critical funding to complete the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project. This project will play a critical role in community safety, response, and recovery after a major earthquake, provides numerous jobs in our region; and move our community closer to its safety and multi-modal transportation goals.

Metro has worked closely with Multnomah County and other local and state agencies to establish Emergency Transportation Routes in our region, recognizing that they'll play an important role in disaster relief. A resilient Burnside Bridge is a critical connection in our Emergency Transportation Routes system. Completion of Multnomah County's Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project will ensure that we have at least one downtown bridge that emergency responders can use after a major earthquake. Making the Burnside Bridge seismically resilient will improve the reliability of the nearly 19-mile Burnside regional emergency lifeline route, which stretches from Washington County to Gresham across the heart of the metro region.

Once built, the new Burnside Bridge will also improve mobility options, including safer and enhanced pedestrian, ADA and bicycle facilities and opportunity to build a new streetcar line.

We support Multnomah County's efforts to replace the current 95-year-old bridge with a multimodal, seismically resilient, reliable bridge for the next 100 years, and urge you to pass HB 3323.