

Submitter: Doug Klotz
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB2098

I support replacing this bridge, but oppose HB 2098-2, because this legislation as currently written jeopardizes a right-sized Bridge Replacement, right now. I support the forthcoming -3 Amendment (and the policy recommendations offered by the Just Crossing Alliance) that ensures this replacement bridge project moves forward smoothly with explicit pro-labor provision, finance guardrails, and major investments in mass transit.

I am opposed to the proposed widening of I-5 through Portland, and the massive interchanges that will be built along this 5-mile-long project. As proposed, the bridge will mean more cars, more traffic, and more air pollution in North and Northeast Portland. The proposal to build a fixed, high bridge will lead to huge, land-gobbling interchanges along this 5-mile route, to ramp up in the sky to get onto and off of this bridge. Even the fixed bridge proposal is not high enough to meet Coast Guard requirements. A lower, lift bridge (perhaps a bascule) will be less expensive, take less land, and result in gentler slopes, so trucks and light rail can more easily cross the new bridge.

I am concerned that building this bridge and widening I-5 through miles of Portland will add to carbon emissions, especially from trucks, emissions that will not be quelled by a switch to electric vehicles, and the pollution caused by rubber tires will be worse when vehicles are heavier electric ones.

I'm concerned that policymakers still refuse to accept the proven principle that wider roads lead to more traffic, and indeed more congestion, rather than less.

Please re-design the proposal to limit the number of lanes, and provide for light rail along the route of I-5, and across the bridge to Vancouver. If the temptation is to substitute buses, design the grades to be light-rail-ready, with provisions for LRT stations at major points along the route, stations that easily access destinations, instead of dropping passengers off underneath a noisy highway bridge.

I look forward to a more forward-thinking policy and actions from the Oregon Legislature, and for direction to ODOT to redesign, and "right-size" this bridge project.

Thank you.
Doug Klotz