

Submitter: Loren Shumaker-Chupp
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 provisions, finance guardrails, and major investments in mass transit.

As someone who uses a wide variety of transit modes in and around the city of Portland, including walking, biking, my car, and buses/public transit, I'm concerned about the balance of safety and ease of use of different transit modes in our city. The focus on making driving easier at the cost of safety of pedestrians is moving in the wrong direction. There is too much of an increased incentive to drive over other transit modes, which puts more cars on the roads, increasing congestion and decreasing safety. We need to encourage modes of transit beyond personal vehicles in order to decrease traffic congestion, not create oversized roads that bring with them further increases in car traffic and the danger that comes with it.

An increase in traffic near the I-5 bridge comes along with an increase in pollution near my home in NE Portland. The city already has some of the worst air quality in the country, and we need to look for solutions to improve this, not make it worse. I'm shocked at the apparent lack of concern for the climate impact a project that results in a freeway expansion has, especially when the cost of that project hinders helpful projects elsewhere in the city.

There are many solutions that have not been sufficiently explored that could result in a far cheaper project, while ensuring quality public transit and avoiding an increase in trips by car.