

Submitter: Sarah Risser

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation

Measure: HB2098

The state of Oregon is experiencing dual health and safety public health crises: road fatalities & serious injuries and climate deterioration leading to potential climate collapse. Expanding freeways not only exacerbates both crises, it is a misuse of public financial resources, out of touch with our current reality and needs, and in marked contrast to what our peer nations are doing at this time. Expanding freeways has been shown, beyond a shadow of a doubt, to increase vehicular traffic, which is, in turn, links with increased road fatalities and emissions. Getting cars off the road instead of enabling ever-more vehicular traffic should be our immediate focus.

I oppose HB 2098 -2 as currently written because it will not result in a smart and forward thinking I-5 bridge replacement. 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. Expending significant financial resources to expand vehicular traffic comes at the expense of proven solutions that Oregonians need and deserve right now: robust public and active transit systems that will make our climate and roads safer and healthier for everyone - even those citizens who choose to continue to drive.

Take us in the right direction with this bridge replacement by ensuring it enables much-needed improvements to public, alt, and active transit. Don't fund an expensive project that primarily caters to vehicular traffic, increases road fatalities and injuries, increases emissions, and by doing so moves us all in the wrong direction.