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April 27, 2023

Joint Transportation Committee

The Honorable Lew Frederick, Co-Chair
The Honorable Susan McLain, Co-Chair
The Honorable Brian Boquist, Co-Vice Chair
The Honorable Shelly Boshart Davis, Co-Vice Chair

RE: Support Funding for Interstate Bridge Replacement Program (HB 2098 -2 amendment)

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain, Co-Vice Chairs Boquist and Boshart Davis, and members of the committee, On behalf of the board of directors and members of Sport Oregon, I urge you to support HB 2098 and take the final step to ensure that the most critical regional infrastructure project of our generation finally moves forward.

Sport Oregon, our state's "sports commission" with 150+ members represents the breadth of businesses and business organizations that are dedicated to supporting, engaging and celebrating sports across our state. In particular, providing reliable and easy access to North Portland with Portland International Raceway, Expo Center and Delta Park as sporting event destinations is critical to the local economy.

Our members support priorities for critical transportation projects – replacement of the antiquated Interstate 5 bridge and Cascadia high speed rail between Portland and Vancouver, BC.

We are aware from our business association colleagues that there is unequivocal bi-partisan support for the federal funding that will be necessary to complete the I-5 bridge replacement project. It was also clear that this funding and the continued support of our federal delegations is contingent upon Oregon meeting its commitment to provide its \$1 billion share of this project.

The I-5 Bridge Replacement is a critical corridor link for the entire Pacific Northwest, West Coast and the nation. Along with other key projects (e.g. the Rose Quarter, West Seattle Bridge, Cascadia High Speed Rail), the I-5 bridge needs urgent replacement due to its seismic vulnerability, and its present design does not meet our region's growing demands from daily users, commuters, pedestrians, visitors, bikers, freight and mass transit users.

For these reasons, for the long-term sustainability of our region's economy, and to avoid the collapse of this essential transportation structure, we strongly urge support of HB 2098 and the -2 amendment. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Etzel".

Jim Etzel CEO, Sport Oregon