



April 27, 2023

**TO: Co-Chair McLain and Co-Chair Frederick
Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation**
RE: Support for HB 2098 – I-5 Bridge Project Support

Co-Chair McLain, Co-Chair Frederick and members of the committee,

NWGA serves as the leading advocate for the grocery retail and supplier industry in the Pacific Northwest, representing Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Collectively NWGA members employ more than 44,000 people at more than 409 locations across Oregon and 455 locations in Washington across the river. Our membership includes the retailers, wholesalers, brokers, manufacturers, and suppliers that support the Pacific Northwest's grocery industry.

The Northwest Grocery Association appreciates the efforts undertaken to replace the I-5 bridge. The transportation infrastructure needs of our region have dramatically increased over the years as our population grows. Our industry relies on the timely delivery of fresh foods and consumer goods to meet the need and demand of our customers. We have significant concerns that the current bridge capacity is not able to serve our current demands, let alone future demands without the proposed investment before you.

We strongly believe the time to fund the I-5 bridge project is now. As you know, Oregon is poised to be eligible for \$3 billion in federal funding, but only if the Legislature takes action to fund the replacement package this Session. Washington State has already committed to its share of the funding, Oregon cannot leave our region unprepared and underequipped to handle future traffic demands and safety concerns.

We cannot wait any longer and it is clear that the current funding proposal represents the strongest collaborative plan offered to-date. We strongly encourage the Oregon Legislature to unanimously support the future economic vitality of our state. The time for bold urgent action is now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Dalton". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Amanda Dalton
President
Northwest Grocery Association