

Submitter: David Binnig
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB2098

I support replacing this bridge but oppose the HB 2098 "-2" amendments that would allow a blank check for an overbuilt freeway expansion at the expense of Oregon's other transportation needs. ODOT is responsible for highways throughout the state that fail to meet basic safety or maintenance standards, taking an annual toll in lives and endangering children walking to school; committing a billion from the general fund with few restraints on further cost increases would sacrifice the state's ability to meet those needs. I live near one such road—SE Powell Boulevard (US 26), where 20 people have died in the past five years, and where ODOT doesn't have the funds to meet its own pedestrian safety standards.

Oregon needs a seismically safe I-5 crossing; it doesn't need to trade away the state's other safety needs for unbounded spending on new interchanges and auxiliary lanes in North Portland. I hope that the legislature will pursue a responsibly-scaled bridge replacement project with real guardrails against escalating costs.