

Submitter: Cassie Wilson
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 a young person, I don't want my generation to be indebted to paying off this freeway megaproject. I'm extremely concerned about the potential long term impacts of this project on our state's general fund and ability to address other needs across Oregon. We need a bridge that is seismically safe, with good public and active transportation options which the existing bridge lacks and are vital for people who can't or don't drive whether due to age, disability, economic, or other reasons. We can replace the bridge in a way that meets these needs without the several miles of freeway expansion and rebuilt interchanges. I'm tired of the basic maintenance of our existing infrastructure being put off because we keep building more and building bigger. I'd hate to see this continue to be the case by blowing all our funds on this one project when hundreds of bridges around the state need seismic upgrades.

Additionally, as a disabled person and caregiver, I'm extremely frustrated by the lack of public transportation options across our state, both at the local level and regionally. Watching billions of dollars be poured into these megaprojects in the Metro area while the rest of the state fails to have our most basic transportation needs met is infuriating.

Let's get this bridge replaced, but make sure it's right-sized, right now.