

Submitter: Ben Birdsall

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 -3 Amendment (and the policy recommendations offered by the Just Crossing Alliance) that ensures this replacement bridge project moves forward smoothly with a right-sized design, explicit pro-labor provisions, financial guardrails, and major investments in mass transit.

As a North Portland resident living with bad air quality, the idea of widening I5 with no emissions consideration offends me. As a resident of Earth, the idea of widening any highway during a crisis of carbon emissions enrages me. As a supporter of worker's rights the lack of any labor provisions in this bill baffles me. As a person who lives on Lombard and sees, year after year, ODoT's refusal to invest any money in safety for the roads they manage as traffic fatalities rise, the idea of their spending untold billions on a boondoggle of a bridge strikes me as morally inexcusable.

This bill is transparently written by industry lobbyists with no consideration for our communities, jobs, or environment. Shame on everyone involved in it's writing. It's 2023 and the climate is on fire. Replace the Interstate Bridge with a cost-effective, transit-friendly bridge and stop letting ODoT and industry lobbyists burn out money and our future.