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**Mingus Mapps** Commissioner **Tara Wasiak** Interim Director

April 28, 2023

Senator Lew Frederick, Co-Chair  
Representative Susan McLain, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Transportation  
900 Court Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the –2 amendment to HB 2098. The Interstate Bridge Replacement Project is a critically important project, not just for the Portland region, but for the state of Oregon and the entire West Coast of the United States. We need a seismically sound bridge to keep our state moving when the earthquake we all know is coming hits. We need a new bridge that improves mobility for all users, helping people and goods move whether by car, truck, transit, bike or foot.

The region has worked hard to come to a shared understanding of what we need out of this project and the City of Portland supports the Modified Locally Preferred Alternative. This will be one of the single largest investments in our region's history, bringing jobs and economic opportunity that will be felt throughout the state and we are eager to see it move forward.

We need this partnership to unlock federal funds, create jobs and build a project that will improve freight mobility, make a key regional transit connection and deliver excellent active transportation facilities. This is a project that will benefit the state for our lifetimes and beyond.

With your recent investments in the state's semiconductor industry, the legislature sent a strong and welcome message to employers that Oregon is open for business. Replacing the Interstate Bridge is another crucial investment in our state's economic development strategy. Employers that are considering locating or expanding their operations here will want to know that their government partners take enabling the flow of people and the flow of goods seriously. They will also want to know that their government partners take planning for the future seriously. And we all know that an earthquake that will cause the existing bridge to collapse into the Columbia River is inevitable. Simply put, we must build this bridge. There is too much at stake to pass up the opportunity on the table before you.

While building the bridge certainly supports a brighter economic future for Oregon far in the future, it also will bring benefits that will benefit Oregonians in the near term. This will be the region's biggest-ever construction project, requiring a mobilization of local workforce for good-paying jobs and for small contractors to build capacity. These opportunities will be shared with people of color and women, who have not benefited from these types of public investments in past generations. Because of the scale of federal investment expected, we can expect the IBR bridge

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replacement project to fundamentally alter the economic trajectory for many Oregonians. This is the type of play that really changes our equity outcomes.

At the same time, the City of Portland has a substantial local transportation system that is just as essential for economic development and thriving communities around the state. We at the City ask that you hold the urgent need for transportation funding in cities and counties at the top of your mind as this bill is considered. Funding the IBR should be a priority for the state legislature and we appreciate that this bill is under consideration. Please also keep in mind that we have more work to do to fund a complete and safe transportation system statewide.

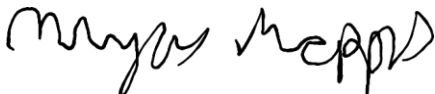
The -2 amendment to HB 2098 also includes a number of elements beyond the funding of the IBR project, and we would like to see some amendments to reflect the hard work that the region has done to come to agreement on the major projects ODOT is building in our communities.

First, the description of the IBR project should align with the Modified Locally Preferred Alternative. This will allow clarity about what exactly is being funded, and what the toll revenues can be spent on.

Second, the City of Portland recently sent a letter reaffirming our commitment to the Rose Quarter project in the form the community has endorsed. We would like to see the description of the Rose Quarter project also align with its complete project definition. It should reflect Portland's expectations for the project, which are beyond just modifications to I-5 and focus on reconnecting the community above the interstate – as well as ensuring the safety of those headed to Blazers games or concerts in the events district.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the -2 amendment to HB 2098 and thank you for finding a funding solution for the Interstate Bridge Replacement project. We appreciate all of the work that has gone into this project, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with the IBR Program to make sure that the bridge replacement delivers on our city, regional and state goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mingus Mapps". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mingus" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Mapps".

Mingus Mapps, Commissioner-in-Charge  
Portland Bureau of Transportation  
City of Portland