



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

To: Co-chairs Frederick and McLain
Co-Vice Chairs Boquist and Boshart Davis
Members of Joint Transportation Committee

FR: Graham Trainor, Oregon AFL-CIO President

RE: I5 Bridge Investments Support Testimony

April 27, 2023

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across Oregon and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. As such, workers across the state understand how critical quality infrastructure is for our communities: For our families to safely travel to and from Washington, to support interstate commerce, and to make sure that Oregon stays on the map when it comes to cutting edge innovation and in the creation of jobs that meaningfully support workers.

That's why the Interstate Bridge Replacement project is a priority for our movement and workers across the state in this legislative session. The urgency here is clear: Parts of the bridge are over 100 years old posing significant hazards for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists and certainly does not meet seismic standards in the event of an earthquake. Couple that with the fact that billions of dollars are available to be leveraged for this project thanks to the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Washington has already allocated \$1 billion for their part of our partnership. Consequently, it's vital that Oregon be next for the safety, resiliency and economy of Oregon.

We want to thank the committee and the chairs for all the work on this concept and we would like to see Section 7 of HB 2098-2 removed from the bill entirely as we are happy to have the conversation about the ways to make this project the most effective and successful as it continues to evolve.

However, I would be remiss not to mention how we know that a project's effectiveness and success – short and long term – is intrinsically linked to high-road labor standards and project labor agreements: From apprenticeships to train the future of this workforce and produce the highest quality infrastructure, to incentivizing American supply chains in order to meaningfully support the local economy, to how workers lives are empirically improved and the economy strengthened when workers are paid living wages and benefits and have a meaningful voice on the job.

With this project, Oregon has a huge opportunity for a win-win across the board: meet the moment to leverage federal dollars, make sure Oregonians are safe and connected pre and post natural disaster, and keep Oregon's economy and communities thriving for years to come. We encourage you to support investments in the I5 Bridge Replacement and to proactively continue the conversation around ensuring the highest quality construction and high-road, family and economy supporting jobs throughout the construction process.