

Submitter: Dan McFarlin  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure: HB2098

The May 3, 2023 Oregonian announced "Budget woes shut down ASTORIA-area transit agency" - a life-line for people who need employment, health care, shopping and social engagement in Clackamas County.

Public transportation throughout Oregon - both within and between URBAN and RURAL areas - needs increased funding. Public transportation provides mobility - "FREEDOM" - for the many who are unable to drive, AND for people who can drive. Public transportation helps resolve traffic congestion, traffic morbidity and mortality, greenhouse gas emissions, unmet roadway maintenance costs, and the very significant escalating state and local budget costs related to urban sprawl. It provides the mobility many Oregonians depend on to stay employed, access health care, and avoid homelessness.

A billion dollars in General Funds? AND a future blank check? The IBR is a poorly conceived \$7.5 BILLION project. These general funds will be added to ODOT's Constitutionally guaranteed pot of gold (yes, it CONTINUES to be a "pot of gold"). For what? To add more pavement to the inventory ODOT claims it lacks sufficient funds to maintain. A serious addiction problem.

We need a new I-5 Columbia River crossing. A lower bridge with a moveable span is possible, practical, safer and AFFORDABLE.

We do NOT need to build new, elevated interchanges and long stretches elevated, seismically vulnerable, interstate. IF ODOT were seriously concerned about seismic vulnerability, they would not have designed long, new stretches of elevated roadway and interchanges.

If we are concerned about seismic vulnerability, we should be addressing the LONG list of seismically vulnerable bridges throughout urban and rural Oregon - along with public schools and other infrastructure.

ALL Oregonians, urban and rural, need mobility. Safe, Economical, Environmentally benign, Equitable transportation. ODOT's IBR is an expensive pavement expansion project we cannot afford. It would increase dependency on single occupant vehicles, and tie up future funds needed to address other needs throughout Oregon.

We need a Department of TRANSPORTATION.