



SISKIYOU TRANSPORTATION, INC.



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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF THE I5 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT HB 2098-2
AMMENDMENT**

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and member of the Committee, my name is Mark Gibson, I own both Siskiyou Transportation, Inc. and Timberland Helicopters, Inc., companies based out of Ashland, Oregon. We operate trucks engaged in forest products transportation as well helicopters providing firefighting services as well as utility patrol services to power companies and natural gas companies throughout the Western United States. We have about 25 employees.

Although we rarely travel the I5 corridor through the Portland area, I understand how vital that corridor is to the economy of the state of Oregon. Generally trucks traveling over the I5 bridge and through the Rose Quarter are on that route because they need to be. Either to make deliveries to the Portland Metro area or pick up or delivery to the Port of Portland or other businesses throughout the area. Over \$70 million dollars of freight travel over the I5 bridge on a daily basis. Congestion is a major problem in the United States and the I5 bridge bottleneck ranks #31 in the country. In addition to congestion the I5 bridge is out of date and seismically unsafe. Congestion not only has a high cost in terms of freight movement but has a high cost in terms of pollution. Slow or stopped vehicles stuck in traffic emit far more emissions than vehicles moving through at a normal rate of travel.

The issue here with HB 2098 is not about designing the bridge, but simply about garnering scarce Federal funds that are available now. The longer we wait to fix the bridge, and ultimately the corridor through Portland, the more it will cost. We need to pass HB 2098 now.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mark D. Gibson
President