

Submitter: Becky Hawkins
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB2098

I support replacing the bridge, but I am writing to oppose HB 2098 -2. Oregonians need a safe bridge that can be used by cars, trucks, bicycles, and public transit. But we absolutely shouldn't write a blank check for freeway expansion.

I bike under I5 to get to work every day, and traffic is always backed up at the exits, where cars and SUVs are trying to funnel into narrow hundred-year-old Portland streets. As Portland's population grows, cars become an increasingly less efficient way for everyone to get around. The future of our transportation shouldn't look like it did ten or twenty years ago. Prioritizing car and truck traffic on the bridge will ultimately add congestion to an already-congested road, and it will increase pollution in North and Northeast Portland neighborhoods. It will also pull funding away from desperately-needed investments in public transit and safety projects on ODOT roads.

By right-sizing this bridge and prioritizing public transit, we have a chance to shape a future with less congestion, less pollution, more tax dollars for other projects, more freedom of choice in how to get to work, and fewer deaths on the road.

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. We need a clean bill focused solely on the replacement of this bridge so we secure immediate federal funding and prepare to hold hold a statewide conversations about the rest of our transportation system in future years.

Thank you.