

April 14, 2025

Joint Committee on Transportation

Oregon State Legislature

Salem, Oregon

RE: HB2749 Appropriates moneys to the Department of Transportation for distribution to the City of Portland for the purpose of designing a bridge across Columbia Boulevard.

**Committee: I am writing in support of HB2749.**

My husband and I have lived in St. Johns for almost 20 years and there are two things we have come to realize; St. Johns is a strong, vibrant community and it is always overlooked when resources are being distributed, while also being one of the first to lose essential resources in budget deficits (pool, community center, police force, social services, and medic services to name a few).

As stated and pointed out by community member and neighbor Michael Veale, we echo his concerns he laid out around the vulnerabilities of our location in addition to the environmental analyses outlined for St. Johns.

Mr. Veale pointed out that Portland faces a significant seismic threat from the Cascadia Subduction Zone, with the St. John's neighborhood particularly vulnerable to catastrophic isolation during a major earthquake. Scientific analysis indicates several critical concerns:

The St. John's peninsula would likely experience extensive soil liquefaction along its waterfront areas to the west, north, and south. Additionally, the 100-foot BNSF railroad cut that bisects the neighborhood presents a formidable barrier to evacuation and emergency response.

The aging St. John's Bridge (which has daily extensive use by semi trucks and community members traveling to and from work) and the four vehicular crossings spanning the railroad cut have not been sufficiently reinforced to withstand a major seismic event. This infrastructure vulnerability could effectively trap over 16,700 residents without evacuation routes or access to emergency services, medical assistance, or essential supplies.

Of particular concern is the proximity to the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub. Earthquake damage to these facilities could release hazardous materials, creating severe health and safety hazards for a population unable to evacuate.

In addition to the fact the location of the CEI Hub is not in a structurally sound location, yet we continue to allow an out-of-state company to disregard laws and put our residents at risk.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

The Daniels