

May 8, 2025

Dear Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Nosse, and Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction:

The Hood River-White Salmon Bridge Authority writes in strong support of funding Oregon's state share of the Hood River-White Salmon Bridge Replacement Project. The Authority is a bi-state commission of twelve members – six from Oregon and six from Washington – appointed by Hood River and Klickitat Counties. We are the governing body responsible for developing, constructing, operating, tolling and financing a new Hood River-White Salmon Bridge.

The Hood River-White Salmon Bridge is a vital connection for our bi-state community in the Gorge. However, it is over a century old and functionally obsolete, with narrow lanes, weight restrictions, seismic vulnerabilities and no bike/ped access. Out of a score of 100, ODOT's sufficiency rating for the bridge is a 7.

As some of you may know, the finance plan for the project includes \$125 million from Oregon and \$125 million from Washington. Washington recently concluded their 2025 Legislative Session and it resulted in a full \$125 million commitment to the project.

In 2023, Oregon took an important step by allocating \$20 million and we are grateful for your leadership in making that happen. To fully leverage the Washington funding commitment and maximize our chances of attaining full federal funding support, Oregon now needs to commit the remaining \$105 million to meet its share of the finance plan. Additionally, an appropriation of funding as outlined in HB 2184 is needed, which calls for \$75 million in the 25-27 biennium and \$30 million in the 27-29 biennium. Both the full commitment and the allocation are critical to the project's continued success.

With the project proceeding through the design phase with a targeted construction start in 2027, success this session is critical to leveraging the Washington state support and showing the federal government that our region is serious about building this bridge. We respectfully urge your support for this commitment and appropriation, whether through the transportation finance legislation being developed by the Joint Committee on Transportation or through HB 2184 now pending in the Joint Committee on Ways and Means after its unanimous passage by the Joint Committee on Transportation or through the bill that is the subject of today's hearing SB 5531.

Timely action is essential to prevent work stoppages later this year and to secure the investments of our Washington state and federal partners.

Sincerely,



Michael Fox, Co-Chair  
Hood River-White Salmon  
Bridge Authority



Jacob Anderson, Co-Chair  
Hood River White-Salmon  
Bridge Authority