

Submitter: Trent Jacobs
On Behalf Of: Our community
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

An Urgent Plea for Safety and Justice in St Johns

A catastrophic natural disaster is not a matter of if—but when. And when it strikes, 20,000 people—families, workers, children—on Portland’s north peninsula will be in the direct line of danger. We will be trapped, with no way out, no way in. No ambulances. No fire trucks. No food. No help.

This isn’t just a hypothetical. The Portland Bureau of Transportation has already warned that key bridges, including one on our designated emergency route, will collapse in the event of a major earthquake. And right next to us—less than a mile away—sits the CEI Hub, holding 90% of the state’s fuel. If that facility is damaged, it could unleash a toxic disaster on top of the destruction. We would be sealed in—with no escape.

We are asking for just \$5 million—not to build, but to begin. To design the bridge that will one day save lives. To take the critical first step so we can qualify for federal funding and build a lifeline to the outside world. But even with that funding, it will take years to complete. We must act now.

There is a 1 in 3 chance that this disaster will strike within the next 35 years. Are we really willing to gamble with our lives?

If we don’t act, what happened in the Superdome during Hurricane Katrina will pale in comparison. Families will be torn apart. Emergency services will be cut off. And if the CEI Hub ignites—we will face an environmental catastrophe with no way out.

This is more than a local concern—this is a state issue and a matter of environmental justice. If any community in Oregon were under this kind of threat, it would deserve an emergency route. We deserve no less.

We are not asking for luxury. We are asking for survival.
Help us build a way out before it’s too late.