

Submitter: Katie Emery

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

A catastrophic natural disaster is imminent, posing a life-threatening risk to approximately 20,000 residents and workers in the north peninsula of Portland. This danger is significantly heightened by the presence of the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub, which stores 90% of Oregon's fuel supply and is located less than a mile from this vulnerable area. In the aftermath of a major earthquake, the community will be completely cut off—without access to evacuation routes, food supplies, or emergency medical assistance.

To address this urgent threat, residents of St. Johns and the peninsula are requesting \$5 million to fund the design phase necessary for Portland to apply for federal funding to rebuild a critical bridge identified by the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) as likely to collapse during a seismic event. This bridge is part of a designated emergency route, and even with funding, it will take years to construct a seismically resilient replacement. With a one-in-three chance of a major earthquake occurring within the next 35 years, it is imperative that we begin this process immediately.

Failure to act now could result in a humanitarian crisis. Without an emergency route, families will be separated, emergency vehicles will be unable to enter or exit, and there will be no access to medical care, food resupply, or repair services. In the worst-case scenario, a toxic release from the CEI Hub could trap residents in a deadly cloud with no means of escape.

This is not just a local issue—it is a state-level crisis and a matter of environmental justice. The CEI Hub's presence places this community under constant threat, and the state has a responsibility to ensure a safe evacuation route. Any city facing such a grave risk deserves the infrastructure necessary to protect its people.