



CITY OF CLATSCHANIE

February 20, 2026

Sub-Committee Co-Chair Girod and Sub-Committee Co-Chair Nosse; and members of the Sub-Committee:

This testimony is to urge the Committee to consider the City of Clatskanie's Capital Construction request of \$5 million to help fund our new Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) project.

The construction of the plant has begun but in order to start construction, we had to secure a \$22 million loan from the State Revolving Fund. We have just begun to tap that loan but should we have to use all of the loan, the utility bills for the City will increase by \$120 per month, per customer, for 30 years. To put this increase in perspective, we will have utility bills higher than the Portland Metro area.

The increase in the utility bills will be devastating to the community. Clatskanie is a community of 1800 people. Our Low-to-Moderate Income index is 56%. Over one half of the students attending the elementary school are eligible for the back-pack lunch program. A just completed housing study shows that the renters in Clatskanie, 72% of them, spend more than the customary one-third of their income on housing. Clatskanie has the highest share of low-income families (earning just \$25,000 a year or less) in Columbia County at 44%. As you can see, an additional \$120 per month will be a significant hardship.

The total cost of the project is over \$33 million. We secured ARPA funds (\$10 million) and a congressional appropriation (\$3 million). We secured the SRF loan, but it is our hope that we can get assistance from the Legislature to ease the loan draw. We have asked the Legislature for help the last four sessions (both short and long sessions) and have not received any appropriation. This is a must-have project, not a want-to-have project. We are building a small housing development, and we need a functional and compliant WWTP to meet housing needs.

Please help us. Our current plant, built in the 1970's is experiencing structural failure, and operating beyond its design specifications. We have been fined by DEQ in recent years. We must replace the plant, and we need the financial help from the legislature to mitigate the cost burden.

Sincerely,

Bob Brajcich
Mayor