

DRAFT

October X, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

Clackamas County, Oregon, enthusiastically supports the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) INFRA grant application to improve the Abernethy Bridge on Interstate 205 (I-205). The Abernethy Bridge is a vital link for freight transportation on the national interstate system providing a wide array of economic benefits to Clackamas County, the State of Oregon, and the nation as a whole.

The proposed project will widen the I-205 Abernethy Bridge with an additional through lane in each direction, eliminating a freight bottleneck on the I-205 corridor. Serving both Oregon and Washington residents and businesses, I-205 is predominantly six lanes for most of its 37-mile length. However, its southern-most section, which includes the Abernethy Bridge, reduces to only four lanes, creating bottleneck congestion in the peak hours, and is very unreliable for freight shipping through the course of the day.

This project will provide enhanced freight mobility that will benefit the entire northwest. I-205 is a major north-south corridor around the Portland area for freight movement with a higher truck percentage than I-5. As such, it connects advanced manufacturing, high tech, forestry, agricultural and distribution/shipping businesses in Clackamas County, Portland, and the Willamette Valley with major import-export facilities such as the Port of Portland, the Portland International Airport, and the Port of Tacoma. Improvements of the bottleneck at the I-205 Abernethy Bridge will benefit the 6,000 Oregon businesses and their 86,000 Oregon employees who depend on reliable movement of products to these freight facilities who do their part to strengthen the economy of Oregon and the nation.

The Clackamas County Board of Commissioners firmly believes the I-205 Abernethy Bridge project will provide significant benefits to local commuters, Clackamas County's economic development, and West Coast freight mobility and achieve the goals of the FAST Act transportation authorization. We urge your support for this project, and thank you for your full and fair consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Clackamas County Board of Commissioners

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Chair

Paul Savas
Vice Chair

Sonya Fischer
Commissioner

Ken Humberston
Commissioner

Martha Schrader
Commissioner