

June **DRAFT**, 2020

Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
United States House of Representatives
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Clackamas County Support for the INVEST in America Act

Dear Chairman DeFazio:

Thank you for your leadership in crafting the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation (INVEST) in America Act, which reauthorizes funding for the country's critical transportation needs. We applaud your work in developing and advancing this transformative piece of legislation that will greatly benefit the state of Oregon and the nation.

Among the noteworthy aspects of the bill, Clackamas County commends you for proposing a 46 percent increase in funding for the Highway Trust Fund. Our urban, suburban, and rural communities have a variety of unique needs, yet all of our residents are adversely impacted by inadequate highway & transit capacity that continues to plague our transportation system. Toward that end, we appreciate the bill's creation of a Projects of National and Regional Significance grant program to fund large transportation infrastructure projects that cannot be funded through other sources. We are working closely with our regional and statewide partners to advance two transportation infrastructure projects that could benefit from these investments – the I-205 (Bottleneck) Widening & Seismic Improvements Project and the Sunrise Gateway Corridor.

As you may know, the state of Oregon has invested more than \$50 million to address the I-205 bottleneck – a seven-mile stretch of the south I-205 corridor that suffers from severe congestion as one of the last four-lane segments of freeway in the Portland metro area. The project will add a third lane in each direction on this Congressionally-designated High Priority Corridor while also adding seismic retrofits to the Abernethy Bridge. Construction funding is needed to advance this nearly shovel ready project beyond 2020.

Likewise, the Sunrise Gateway Project along Highway 212/224 near the Clackamas Industrial Area has undergone significant design improvements to make it competitive for inclusion in Metro's forthcoming regional transportation measure. The measure will only fund a portion of the Sunrise Gateway project if passed, but programmatic funding through the INVEST Act has the potential to finish the project because of its new design that emphasizes increased transit and active transportation accommodations, as well as carbon reduction goals. The project will serve the fastest growing city in Oregon, the City of Happy Valley, and areas east to provide desperately needed housing where over 1000 acres of undeveloped land within the current urban growth sits idle due to underserved road access and capacity limitations.

Once again, thank you for your work on behalf of the state of Oregon and the nation to improve our transportation infrastructure. We look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Thank you,

Jim Bernard, Chair
On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioner