

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
49th DISTRICT  
**JIM MOELLER**  
DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEM

State of  
Washington  
House of  
Representatives



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RULES

June 25, 2008

Columbia River Crossing Task Force  
700 Washington Street, Suite 300,  
Vancouver Washington 98660

**RECEIVED**  
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Columbia River Crossing

Dear Sir/Madame:

Over the next several months you will be making decisions that will greatly affect the quality of life in Southwest Washington as well as our neighbors across the Columbia River. As you know, the phenomenal growth in our area and the mass numbers of citizens crossing the Columbia River each day have brought the issue of the aging I-5 Bridge to a critical point.

The decision as to what is the best alternative for replacing this bridge is one that will impact the area for many generations. The high cost of fuel, traffic congestion, environmental concerns, a growing population and the need for transportation alternatives must drive the final solution. The ideal bridge configuration should include the following:

- Replace the existing I-5 Bridge with a new crossing downstream west of the current alignment and remove the existing bridge. The design would require a "Staked Transit/Highway Bridge" design that would require three new bridges rather than the three needed in a standard replacement crossing design. This STHB design would include transit beneath the highway deck of the I-5 southbound bridge and would suspend the bicycle and pedestrian path under the eastern edge of the northbound I-5 Bridge.
- The new crossing design should incorporate one of the bridges *for light rail instead of for bus transit*, as well as dedicated transit lanes for bicyclist and pedestrians.

The opportunity exists for Southwest Washington to connect to an already established and operating high capacity transit (light rail) in Oregon. Additionally, there is a real possibility that the initial cost of incorporating the line into the replacement bridge on I-5 will be financed with federal funds. Regardless of who pays, a dedicated light rail line across the replacement bridge that connects Vancouver to the greater Portland area is a better long term option for the future.

We are not building a bridge for ourselves but ultimately for future generations. Investing in a hundred year bridge *without* including light rail as it is being expanded throughout the economic powerhouse to the South is shortsighted and will ultimately regulate Vancouver's economic growth.

Thank you for your efforts and please contact my office with any questions or comments.

Sincerely

Representative Jim Moeller, 49<sup>th</sup> District



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