

Mission: To enhance the region's economy and quality of life by providing efficient cargo and air passenger access to national and global markets.

 **PORT OF PORTLAND**
Possibility. In every direction.

February 4, 2009

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kurt Schrader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Greg Walden
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable David Wu
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Members of the Oregon Congressional Delegation:

I am writing to express the support of the Port of Portland for federal funding for the Columbia River Crossing project. In particular, I hope that funding for the project can be secured in the FY2010 Transportation Appropriations bill and the next surface transportation authorization bill.

The Port of Portland has actively supported a new Columbia River crossing for many years. The current I-5 bridge is a serious bottleneck impeding the flow of freight through and around the Portland-Vancouver region. Freight mobility is critical to the economic health of the region, as it is a larger freight center than its population size would indicate. For example, one in five jobs in Oregon is linked to international trade, and 120,000 jobs or 10 percent of the jobs in the Portland-Vancouver region is involved in trade and transportation.

The current I-5 bridge plays a central role in the movement of this freight. For the Port of Portland alone, the river crossing and the associated interchanges provide access to the Port's marine terminals, Port-owned industrial property, and hundreds of Port-related commercial businesses. This significant concentration of freight activity requires a more efficient and safer river crossing to handle the 100 percent growth in freight volumes that is projected for the Portland-Vancouver region.

In addition to its surface transportation benefits, a new bridge could improve the safety of barge traffic on the Columbia River. Barges must now execute a challenging S-turn when passing under the current I-5 bridge (during low water conditions) and through the railroad bridge just downriver. A new bridge could be built high enough (without a lift feature) to allow a straightforward passage through the two bridges.

The Oregon and Washington Departments of Transportation and their partners have made a great deal of progress in planning for a new Columbia River crossing. The Port of Portland would greatly appreciate your support for the funding that is needed to sustain this progress.

Sincerely,


Bill Wyatt
Executive Director

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