



CLARK COUNTY WASHINGTON

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CLARK COUNTY COUNCIL

Marc Boldt, Chair
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June 27, 2018

Oregon Department of Transportation
Value Pricing Advisory Committee
355 Capitol St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Oregon Transportation Commission
355 Capitol St. NE, MS11
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Value Pricing Advisory Committee,

The Clark County Council previously expressed concern to you regarding potential tolling on the Interstate 5 and 205 corridors and its outright opposition to the proposed maximum tolling design known as "Concept C." In addition to "Concept C," the Clark County Council strongly urges you to abandon "Concept B" as part of the pilot program of tolling lanes on I-5 between Going Street and Multnomah Boulevard.

At first blush, it appears "Concept B" is being floated as a more palatable option to "Concept C." The truth of the matter is "Concept B" would have a negative impact on traffic on both sides of the river, and Clark County commuters would be disproportionately affected by this tolling concept.

If "Concept B" is initiated, anyone driving to the east side of Portland and south of Going Street will very likely choose the Glenn L. Jackson Bridge. Many commuters who normally would use I-5 will divert to I-205 via State Routes 500 and 14, Clark County's major east/west freeways. These routes already handle a large amount of traffic considering they are both two-lane highways in both directions, and SR 500 has several stop lights between I-5 and I-205.

Currently, when one bridge is backed up during rush hour — forcing commuters to divert to the other bridge — SR 500 and 14 become parking lots. Clark County residents who work in Clark County are caught in this traffic despite the fact that they are not traveling to Portland.

"Concept B" will turn this occasional traffic dilemma into an every-day occurrence. Not only will the plan not alleviate congestion in Portland, it will artificially impose greater congestion on the north side of the river.

Increased congestion on SR 500 and 14 won't be the only traffic issue. Those traveling via I-205 to avoid tolls are going to end up on east Portland surface streets and will cross the Willamette on smaller Portland bridges instead of using the Marquam or Freemont bridges that are better equipped to handle commuter traffic.

In addition to an abysmal traffic situation, Clark County commuters are — as with "Concept C" — being asked to bear the brunt of paying the proposed tolls.

As you know, Clark County residents working in Oregon do not have another option for entering your state to get to their places of employment. The bridges connecting our communities are the only routes to their livelihoods.

As local elected officials, we understand and appreciate the importance of keeping infrastructure safe and transportation moving. Clark County maintains 2,600 lane miles of roads in both urban and rural areas. Clark County is a vibrant community situated along the interstate highway that connects all of North America, and we realize how vital it is to keep freight, goods, tourists, businesses and workers moving smoothly along I-5.

That said, we do not believe that alleviating the congestion that takes place in Portland should be disproportionately paid for by Clark County commuters. The Clark County Council believes county residents who travel to Oregon will receive little to no benefit from infrastructure improvements constructed with the tolling design proposed in "Concepts B or C."

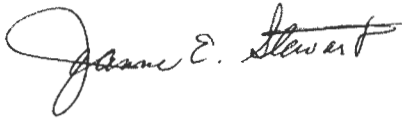
It is unfair to ask Clark County residents to pay for transportation enhancements that will not address their concern of spending an inordinate amount of time in traffic that means less time at home with their families.

Again, the Clark County Council strongly urges you to forgo the "Concept B" tolling design.

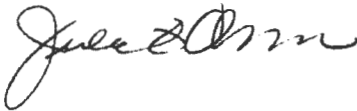
Sincerely,



Marc Boldt, Chair



Jeanne E. Stewart, Councilor District 1



Julie Olson, Councilor District 2



John Blom, Councilor District 3



Eileen Quiring, Councilor District 4