Dear Elected Official, It’s not too late to PULL THE PLUG on this failed project.

The Columbia River Crossing (CRC) is riddled with misrepresentation and mismanagement of taxpayer funds. Please realize your position as an elected official to support the citizens of both Oregon and Washington to deny any future funding of this failed and costly project.

10 reasons why the CRC should be stopped now:

1) **CRC has a poor track record.** The CRC was created in 2005 to complete a buildable plan in 3 years at a cost of $50 million. Currently in it’s 8th year, it has spent over $160 million - a 300% cost overrun. The $160 million already spent on design is only 4% of projected construction costs of a $3.6 billion project.

2) **The CRC is a waste of taxpayers funds.** The CRC continues to burn over $70,000 of taxpayers cash per day. The enormous cost of this project will continue to be a burden on local commuters, taxpayers, and state budgets for decades if it is not stopped. The CRC still has no buildable plan, no secured funding, and ever mounting mitigation issues due to unacceptable bridge height to accommodate light rail.

3) **Light rail is not required for transit funding.** Oregon’s Supreme Court decision stated that the massive project is only a “political necessity” to persuade Clark County residents to accept a light rail line to Vancouver. The enormous cost of light rail includes increased insurance rates for businesses and residents near light rail lines, new taxes for law enforcement, enormous taxpayer subsidies, and loss of street parking for businesses.

4) **Tolls will take away money from our local economy.** A bi-state commuter could easily spend $2,000 per year on tolls. CRC’s own documents show tolls could be high as $8 each way and 4 times as much for large trucks. Tolls would increase costs for local businesses relying on freight deliveries for daily operations. Local citizens will be paying tolls on the debt for many years, and Oregon intends to toll I-205 to pay for the Oregon portion of project cost.

5) **The CRC plan is a job killer.** Tolls, light rail, and 6+ years of construction without financial mitigation for indirect impacts will kill the small business community in downtown Vancouver and Hayden Island. The “average annual regional jobs” created is not 20,000, but actually 1,907 temporary jobs. This figure does not factor in the many long term jobs lost, or the possibility of large job providers relocating due to the creation of a river commerce choke point.

6) **River traffic is of vital importance.** The proposed new bridge would become the lowest clearance bridge from the Pacific Ocean to The Dalles (190 miles). The CRC plan does not meet current marine traffic clearance needs, will limit future marine business, and goes against national trends of higher bridges for larger vessels. The Columbia River is one of the few important military and commerce major waterways on the West coast. Water transportation is the most fuel efficient, least polluting, safest, and least expensive means of moving cargo.

7) **The Columbia River Interstate Bridge is not the problem.** There are 850 "structurally deficient" bridges in Oregon & Washington, and the Columbia River Interstate Bridge is not one of them. The I-5 bridge is a historic landmark that is safe, with an impressive 178’ of clearance for river traffic that does not impede river commerce. A seismic retrofit to our current bridge could be done for a small fraction of the cost of replacement. A Oregon Department of Transportation report shows that an earthquake scenario of magnitude 9.0 at the Cascadia Subduction Zone resulted in only slight or moderate damage to the Columbia River Interstate Bridge with no extensive damage and no collapse.

8) **The BNSF Railroad Bridge offers a better solution.** 95% of I-5 bridge lifts would be eliminated by updating the downstream railroad bridge. The railroad bridge is a swing bridge, but the swing is aligned with the lift section of the I-5 bridge. If the railroad bridge was updated with a middle lift, barges could pass under tall south side section of I-5 without lifts. This project is shovel ready and has previously been given the green light by the US Coast Guard.

9) **CRC lacks vision.** Traffic projections to justify the project are failing. The CRC uses a mid-20th century freeway-only mentality which does not take in consideration the importance of community, river commerce, job loss, stress of tolls, and the drop in freeway and transit use due to telecommuting that has grow by 73% between 2005 and 2011.

10) **There is a lack of support by the voters.** Light rail has been firmly voted down multiple times, and the 2012 election further proved the public’s staunch opposition.

It’s hard to ignore that the CRC plan is outdated, wasteful, and needs to be stopped. During these times of budget shortfalls, debt, growing environmental concerns and a rapidly increasing trend of telecommuting, it is painfully clear that freeway expansion, tolls, and expensive light rail is antiquated thinking.

Thank you,

Please visit stopcrc.com for more information and sources.

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