



January 9, 2026

Rear Admiral Arex Avanni  
Commander  
U.S. Coast Guard District Northwest  
915 Second Avenue, Rm 3510  
Seattle, WA 98174-1067  
Submitted via: [d13-smb-d13-bridges@uscg.mil](mailto:d13-smb-d13-bridges@uscg.mil)

Dear Admiral Avanni:

On behalf of the City of Portland, we write in support of the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) program's desire for a fixed span replacement bridge as it best balances all regional needs for river commerce, roadway commerce, transit operations, and roadway safety.

This critical effort sponsored by the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Washington Department of Transportation, in coordination with eight local partner agencies, will replace the aging Interstate Bridge across the Columbia River with a modern, seismically resilient, multimodal structure. Interstate 5 connects tens of thousands of people daily to jobs, schools, sporting events, places of worship, stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues throughout SW Washington and the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. As the only continuous north-south freeway between Canada and Mexico, the Interstate Bridge is part of a critical trade route for regional, national, and international commerce.

Interstate 5 is one of the most important freight corridors in the nation. A replacement bridge that addresses the safety issues and crash rate that is three times higher than other facilities is crucial to improving the safety of families, workers, and freight. The existing bridge lifts hundreds of times per year causing traffic to back-up for miles and delays to the public, transit, and freight. A movable bridge would result in transit system delays when trains are stopped for bridge lifts. A movable span could disrupt operations for the entire 18-mile segment when trains stop for a bridge opening.

The Coast Guard's decision on bridge height approving a fixed span bridge is key to completing the federal environmental process and receiving approval to move to construction. Construction of the IBR Program is key to supporting continued growth of the economy and the increase in goods moved by freight. Construction of IBR Program investments will support tens of thousands of jobs in multiple industries and is expected to generate economic benefits nearly double the cost to build the program.

We appreciate your consideration of the local and regional support for the fixed span option.

Sincerely,

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Wilson'.

Keith Wilson  
Mayor

A cursive handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elana Pirtle-Guiney'.

Elana Pirtle-Guiney  
Council President

A cursive handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olivia N. Clark'.

Olivia Clark  
Councilor, District 4  
Chair, Transportation and  
Infrastructure Committee