

Fischer, Steven M CIV USCG D13 (USA)

From: rarp amplifygroup.com <rarp@amplifygroup.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 8, 2026 10:01 AM
To: D13-SMB-D13-BRIDGES
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Response to Replies Regarding Public Notice 04-25

Mr. Fisher:

I serve as President of a business leaders group in southwest Washington, Identity Clark County, and have been forwarded your reply to several parties who have responded to **Public Notice 04-25 dated 12 December 2025**. Our organization is partly responsible for prompting the numerous letters you are receiving in support of a fixed span I-5 bridge.

We appreciate that the Coast Guard has opened this comment period primarily to ensure that river users who may need clearance greater than 116 feet can be accommodated in some manner.

We took occasion to correspond because, while we understand that "**The Coast Guard is specifically interested in hearing from vessel owners and facilities...**" we also note under the solicitation of comments section that, "**Interested parties are requested to express their views, in writing, on the proposed bridge project including its possible impacts to navigation.**"

Businesses across the region definitely consider themselves "interested parties" for a variety of direct and indirect reasons. We also recognize the very short turnaround time before a determination, in keeping with Commandant Kevin Lunday's pledge to Sen. Maria Cantwell during his confirmation proceedings to have a response by January 16, 2026. This comment period appears to be our only structured opportunity to share our perspective.

We are very appreciative that the Interstate Bridge Replacement program office and Governors of Oregon and Washington have negotiated mitigation agreements with the four primary companies who rely upon occasional bridge lifts for extra clearance. This makes it possible to consider a lower profile bridge which eliminates the only traffic-stopping liftspan on I-5 across the entire US and improve safety and visibility. A lower profile bridge is likely to save the country around \$0.5-2.0B in construction costs, eliminate ongoing bridge tending expenses, ensure the flow of \$25B of activity on the Columbia River, support \$30B of freight and commerce to cross the Columbia River by road, and protect the untold billions of goods that move by rail.

For a decade, we have advocated for replacing the I-5 bridge and improving its influence area. This region is at significant risk of an overdue Cascadia megathrust earthquake, which threatens the flow of billions of dollars in river commerce and global trade. Rather than impractically upgrade a poorly designed 109-year old structure which likely would constrict shipping lanes, we have advocated for a replacement bridge with lower profile fixed span. This structure would improve river navigation through a challenging "S-curve" to a clear rail bridge a mile west and likely open the door for additional river commerce.

While we recognize and appreciate the Administration's interest in rebooting maritime defense activity, we note that there is **no space east of the I-5 bridge** and west of the lower profile I-205 bridge that would accommodate any large-scale industry. Additionally, the 43-foot shipping channel ends to west of the

bridge which makes any expanded defense maritime activity more suited for properties **west of the bridge** along the 100-plus miles of the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean.

In summary, we support your efforts to identify and accommodate those who may be constrained by a 116-foot I-5 bridge clearance. We also want to signal broad and deep business and community support for replacing the I-5 bridge with a lower profile fixed span.

I am happy to speak with you in greater detail, and would welcome you to speak with our business leaders at an upcoming meeting.

Respectfully,

Ron Arp

Identity Clark County

360.601.2991



Business Leaders Building Community