



January 8, 2026

Commander
US Coast Guard District Northwest
915 Second Avenue, Room 3510
Seattle, WA 98174-1067

RE: Comments on the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program General Bridge Permit Application

Dear Commander,

On behalf of Sorin Garber & Associates (SGA), I am submitting this letter to **affirm support** for the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program's **fixed span bridge configuration** option over the Columbia River with 116' of vertical navigation clearance.

SGA appreciates the diligence of the IBR Program in studying multiple options to address the project's purpose and need while balancing many priorities. We believe our region is best served by a fixed span option allowing for a safe, practical and more cost-effective bridge design. We understand that formal Agreements have granted adequate mitigation for those few companies that depend upon a higher clearance for a portion of their commerce.

A lift span offers little navigation and safety opportunities to marine traffic, but would bring significant negative economic consequences. It is critical to our region, state, and nation that replacement of the Interstate 5 bridge commence as soon as possible. The impacts of congestion due in part to the existing movable span, which causes frequent delays, are real and exponentially impact our region's economic viability. Safety and multimodal enhancements to meet the needs of all transportation modes, as defined in the Program's Supplemental DEIS, will undoubtedly result in a positive return on investment.

We work with the barge industry who, in recognizing the impact of bridge lifts to I-5 traffic delays and the corresponding increases in fuel consumption, travel cost, and carbon emissions, have voluntarily ceased travel under the Interstate Bridge during peak travel periods to avoid interruptions caused by bridge lifts. I ask that the Coast Guard do the same and consider the combined impacts of bridge lifts to both surface and marine travel.

We appreciate the efforts of all involved in planning, designing, and funding of this critical transportation facility expected to last a century. Let's proceed to construction as soon as possible.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sorin Garber
Sorin Garber & Associates

cc: info@interstatebridge.org