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January 9, 2026

Commander
U.S. Coast Guard District Northwest
915 Second Avenue, Rm 3510
Seattle, WA 98174-1067
Submitted via: d13-smb-d13-bridges@uscg.mil

Dear Rear Adm. Avanni:

We are writing in support of the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program's (IBR) efforts to replace the aging Interstate Bridge across the Columbia River with a modern, seismically resilient, multimodal structure. As a key agency partner on the IBR Program, we support a fixed span replacement bridge as it best balances the various needs of the program and the region, including river commerce, roadway commerce, transit operations, and roadway safety.

More than 140,000 travelers cross the bridge each day to access jobs, commerce, and services. The bridge is one of the worst traffic bottlenecks on the entire West Coast, posing challenges for the more than \$132 million in freight that crosses the bridge every day on its way to customers and markets worldwide, and a replacement bridge will improve travel reliability and congestion on I-5. Replacement of the bridge is also crucial to improving the safety of the families and workers who cross the river every day. The existing bridge lifts hundreds of times per year, causing backups and traffic delays to the public, transit, and freight. A movable replacement bridge would result in continued delays to vehicular traffic, create new delays for light rail transit service on the bridge, and would likely also continue to require lift restrictions during peak weekday hours similar to those restrictions that exist today, while a fixed span replacement bridge would alleviate those impacts.

The Coast Guard's decision on bridge height is key to completing the federal environmental process and receiving approval to move to construction, and approving a fixed span replacement bridge will allow the program to move toward construction without further delays. Construction of the IBR Program will support continued growth of the economy and the increase in goods moved by freight, and will support tens of thousands of jobs in multiple industries. The Program also anticipates that gross total economic impact from construction will bring a regional benefit 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 handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Peterson".

Lynn Peterson
Metro Council President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashton Simpson".

Ashton Simpson
Deputy Metro Council President