



OREGON STATE SENATE
900 COURT ST NE
SALEM, OR 97301

Governor Kate Brown
900 Court St NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

August 10, 2017

Subject – Request to not veto Section 83 (Capital Highway Project) of HB 5006.

Dear Governor Brown,

I respectfully disagree with your tentative decision to veto Section 83 (Capital Highway Project) of HB 5006. I want you to know that I do not take your tentative decision personally. I trust you will not take my comments personally.

In positions like ours, we often rely on the recommendations of staff and in most cases our staffs do excellent work. In this case, however, your staff either erred in recommending a veto or failed to correct your perception of the project.

The basis for your potential veto, as identified by your communications director, included:

1. It should have been part of the transportation package;
2. It was not selected in careful, bipartisan manner;
3. It should be evaluated on its own merits like other transportation projects in a future legislative session.

To the first point: This project is not like most of the projects in in the transportation plan. It is a community project and, in reality, it more closely resembles other community projects the Legislature funded in House Bill 5006 than it does the transportation projects included in House Bill 2017.

In addition to road improvements, this project includes enhancements for pedestrians, bicycles, transit, traffic safety and economic development. A substantial portion of the project is storm water management upgrades. Also, unlike some of the projects in the transportation plan, this project has been in the planning and design stages for more than 20 years. Further, unlike all of the projects in the transportation plan and most of the community projects, the state is only contributing \$1 for every \$5 the community has committed.



To the second point: This project was, in fact, selected in a careful, bipartisan manner. I cannot avoid taking offense to the argument that it wasn't. For any legislation to move in the Joint Ways and Means Committee, both the Senate and House Co-Chairs must agree. Then, every item must go through a subcommittee where there must be an affirmative vote from both House and Senate members. Next, every item must go to the full committee and receive an affirmative from both the House and Senate members.

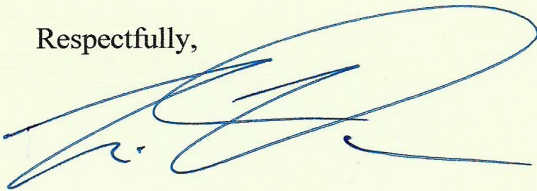
As the Senate Co-Chair of the Joint Ways and Means Committee, I can assure you that we spent the session reviewing every item before us in a careful and bipartisan manner. The Capital Construction Sub-Committee reviewed every capital project extensively. The final recommendation of the subcommittee was unanimous with one member excused. The full committee voted to approve the measure 18-2. The House approved it on a 48-11 vote and it passed the Senate 26-4.

Finally, to your third point: Suggesting that this project be evaluated on its own merits like other transportation projects in a future legislative session is spurious at best. It appears to more likely be a good example of a press release written by someone who has no understanding of the legislative process.

The Legislature will not even consider another transportation package for a number of sessions. So, in reality, if this project is vetoed, it will come back in either the 2018 or 2019 session and repeat the same thorough bipartisan process by which it was overwhelmingly recommended and approved in the 2017 session.

I implore you to reconsider vetoing this project and recognize it is a worthwhile community endeavor, for which the local government is providing 80 percent of the funds. Tens of thousands of Oregonians can benefit if the state chooses to be a partner, rather than an adversary, in making this stretch of Capitol Highway safer for all.

Respectfully,



Senator Richard Devlin