



May 17, 2021

Senator Fred Girod, Co-Chair
Representative Paul Holvey, Co-Chair
Ways & Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction

RE: Safety Improvements for OR-213 (82nd Avenue) in the Portland Metro Area

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey:

State highway OR-213, also known as 82nd Avenue in the Portland Metro Area, is a high crash corridor that is home to some of the most diverse census tracts in Oregon. **We are calling for extensive safety improvements to address a concerning pattern of traffic fatalities in this region.** Like other state-owned highways under Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) jurisdiction, OR-213 was originally part of Oregon's highway system to move goods from "farm to market," but its use has changed to serve as a local road for the surrounding community.

In 2018, ODOT released the "82nd Avenue of Roses Implementation Plan" that identified safety improvements needed to adapt this highway to local needs, including additional pedestrian crossings and signal improvements. Funding has not been secured to implement these recommended improvements.

While the state continues to delay meeting its responsibility for the safety needs of the corridor, people are being injured and hurt on a regular basis. For example, just this past month, there were two separate pedestrian fatalities at the intersection of NE 82nd Ave and Alberta. Last week, the Oregon Transportation Committee approved \$3.35 million for pedestrian safety upgrades on 82nd Avenue. This level of funding is embarrassingly inadequate to meet urgent safety needs. Upon review of the investment need identified by ODOT and PBOT for 82nd Avenue, **we are calling for a \$80 million investment in the 2021-23 budget for 82nd Avenue.**

Delaying investments again will result in more traffic injuries and deaths and a higher price tag for making upgrades in the future. By starting to make safety improvements over the next

biennium, the state will protect people and move toward the goal of transferring OR-213 to the City of Portland.

Businesses, residents, and schools are relying on us to address these urgently needed safety improvements. Among the most tragic stories that we have learned are students who have been killed while crossing this road. The state's support for these investments will ensure that these road conditions are improved while the work continues to secure additional local, state, and federal funding toward jurisdictional transfer in the future.

Sincerely,



Representative Khanh Pham, HD-46



Representative Tina Kotek, HD-44



Representative Karin Power, HD-41



Representative Mark Meek, HD-40



Representative Tawna Sanchez, HD-43



Representative Barbara Smith Warner, HD-45



Senator Lew Frederick, SD-22



Senator Michael Dembrow, SD-23



Senator Kathleen Taylor, SD-21