



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Transportation

Director's Office

355 Capitol St. NE, MS 11

Salem, OR 97301

**DATE:** February 10, 2016

**TO:** Senate Committee on Business and Transportation

**FROM:** Paul Mather, Administrator  
ODOT Highway Division

**SUBJECT:** Senate Bill 1510-3

## INTRODUCTION

The -3 amendment to SB 1510 would remove the provision directing the Oregon Department of Transportation to designate a future Hood River Bridge as a part of Oregon Route 35.

## DISCUSSION

The Oregon Department of Transportation has committed to pursuing National Highway System designation for the Hood River Bridge (owned by the Port of Hood River); National Highway System routes are designated by the Federal Highway Administration. We have begun an expedited internal review process, and have reached out and received support from the Port of Hood River and Washington state; one criterion FHWA considers is whether there is support from affected parties. We expect to submit the completed application, including ODOT's recommended approval, to the Federal Highway Administration by early next week. Washington state is also initiating an NHS designation for the portion of the route in Washington. The decision is ultimately up to the Federal Highway Administration.

The Port of Hood River is pursuing National Highway System designation to be eligible for a new funding opportunity. The federal FAST Act, passed by Congress late last year, includes a new competitive grant program named the Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects program. The main purpose of this program is to fund large (\$100 million or more) surface transportation projects that facilitate the movement of freight. Within this broader competitive grant program, a special eligibility exists for freight-related highway and bridge projects located within National Scenic Areas. In order to take advantage of this special eligibility, highway and bridge projects within National Scenic Areas must also be located on the federally designated National Highway System. The Hood River Bridge is located within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, but it is not currently designated as a part of the National Highway System.

## SUMMARY

The -3 amendment would remove the provision of the bill that makes a future Hood River Bridge part of OR 35. ODOT is committed to pursuing NHS designation for the Hood River Bridge on behalf of the Port of Hood River.