



NEWS RELEASE



Washington State Legislature

Oregon State Legislature

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Bi-State Bridge Coalition completes initial meeting to ask: ‘What’s next?’

A group of legislators from Washington and Oregon met in Vancouver Wednesday to initiate discussions on whether to seek new options for a bridge or bridges to connect the two states over the Columbia River between Clark County and Portland. The Bi-State Bridge Coalition meeting, organized by [Sen. Ann Rivers, R-La Center](#), [Rep. Liz Pike, R-Camas](#), and [Rep. John Huffman, R-The Dalles](#), is the first between legislators since the Columbia River Crossing project was scrapped by the Washington and Oregon legislatures due to differences that included light rail and low river clearance.

“First, we want to make it very clear this is not an effort to revive the Columbia River Crossing project. We recognize, however, that although the CRC is dead, our interstate traffic problems will not simply vanish,” said **Pike**, a member of the [Washington House Transportation Committee](#). “Hitting the reset button means we begin anew and determine what’s next. We believe it’s time to move past the CRC, leave behind components such as light rail that doomed that project, and focus on newer, comprehensive transportation solutions between Southwest Washington and the Portland metro area.”

“All of us recognize that before we even begin to talk about building a bridge or bridges between Oregon and Washington, we first have to rebuild relationships between our two states,” said **Huffman**, who serves on the [Oregon Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means](#). “A lot of money was spent between the two states on the CRC project. What led to its ultimate failure is that we never really came together in a bipartisan, bi-state effort to forge a working solution that would be acceptable to both states. We won’t make that mistake again. We have to work together to make it work successfully. That effort begins today.”

Organizers invited 22 legislators to the initial private meeting. Eight from Washington and four from Oregon attended. They included:

WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

Sen. Annette Cleveland, D-Vancouver
Sen. Curtis King, R-Yakima
Sen. Ann Rivers, R-La Center
Rep. Norm Johnson, R-Yakima
Rep. Ed Orcutt, R-Kalama
Rep. Liz Pike, R-Camas
Rep. Dean Takko, D-Longview
Rep. Sharon Wylie, D-Vancouver

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OREGON STATE LEGISLATURE

Sen. Lee Beyer, D-Springfield
Rep. John Huffman, R-The Dalles
Rep. Julie Parrish, R-West Lynn
Rep. Tobias Read, D-Beaverton

“We are very grateful to all the Oregon and Washington legislators who took time from their busy schedules to attend this initial relationship-building meeting. This gave us the opportunity to determine if there is interest in new cross-river transportation solutions without light rail that would relieve traffic congestion and improve freight mobility between our states,” said **Rivers**, a member of the [Washington Senate Ways and Means Committee](#). “I’m pleased to say those who attended today have expressed interest in meeting again in an open public forum and working cooperatively to determine future transportation solutions.”

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PHOTO: Legislators from Washington and Oregon met in Vancouver Wednesday to discuss options for a future bridge or bridges between Clark County and Portland.

