



NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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House passes bill to create West Coast Infrastructure Exchange Task Force

HB 2345 would help Oregon make smart investments in infrastructure projects to create local jobs and improve the economy

SALEM – The Oregon House approved a bill today that will prepare the state for a new way of investing in critical upgrades to roads, energy projects, and water treatment facilities.

House Bill 2345 would create the West Coast Critical Infrastructure Exchange Task Force. The 10-member Task Force would prepare Oregon to join a regional partnership that will help finance public infrastructure projects that municipal and state governments might not be able to afford on their own.

“Oregon will need to invest hundreds of billions of dollars in infrastructure projects over the next couple of decades,” Representative Tobias Read (D – Beaverton) said. “This bill prompts us to find the changes we must make to marry private agility with public accountability – to stretch taxpayer dollars, create more jobs, and deliver greater value.”

Oregon, Washington, California and British Columbia are organizing the West Coast Infrastructure Exchange (WCX) to facilitate development of infrastructure that will improve economic competitiveness and to support jobs and families in the Pacific Northwest.

“Our region must work together to meet our growing infrastructure needs,” Representative John Lively (D – Springfield) said. “The huge demand to build roads, rail, power grids, and other infrastructure will bring jobs to Oregon for decades to come. I’m glad we’re taking smart, forward-thinking steps to support economic growth.”

The Task Force created by House Bill 2345 will recommend methods to identify the range of infrastructure projects, circumstances, and techniques that make sense for Oregon’s participation in the WCX.

“We can unleash enormous potential by ensuring the infrastructure our economy needs,” said Rep. Read, Chair of the House Transportation and Economic Development Committee and chief sponsor of House Bill 2345.

House Bill 2345 passed the House by a vote of 59-0 and now heads to the Senate.

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