

TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL BURTON, CHAIRMAN
OF THE METROPOLITAN SERVICE DISTRICT COUNCIL
BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE HOUSE
AND SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEES
SEPTEMBER 21, 1979

MY NAME IS MICHAEL BURTON AND I AM CHAIRMAN OF THE METROPOLITAN SERVICE DISTRICT, THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT WHICH BEGAN SERVING THE PEOPLE OF THE PORTLAND, OREGON METROPOLITAN AREA ON JANUARY 1, 1979.

WHILE THE FORMATION OF OREGON'S NEW GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN PERCEIVED BY SOME ON YOUR SIDE OF THE RIVER, AS WELL AS OURS, AS A BARRIER TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR WORKING TOGETHER TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS THAT COLLECTIVELY PLAGUE US, I BELIEVE THE ARRANGEMENT OFFERS US NEW OPPORTUNITIES, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF TRANSPORTATION.

FOR SOME TIME, WASHINGTON AND OREGON JURISDICTIONS HAVE HELD DIFFERING VIEWS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS IN THE I-5 CORRIDOR. WHILE MAJOR CONSTRUCTION IS UNDERWAY THAT IS PLANNED TO RESPOND TO THE SIGNIFICANT CORRIDOR PROBLEMS INCLUDING I-205, THE SLOUGH BRIDGE PROJECT AND THE I-5 FREEWAY IMPROVEMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, THERE CONTINUES TO BE UNCERTAINTY THAT VARIOUS SUGGESTED LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS SUCH AS A THIRD BRIDGE, A LIGHT RAIL LINE OR SOME OTHER MASS TRANSPORTATION SOLUTION HAVE NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY ADDRESSED ON A COOPERATIVE BASIS.

I BELIEVE THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR US TO ADDRESS THESE MATTERS AND TO DO SO IN SUCH A WAY AS TO TURN CONCERNS INTO CONSENSUS.

WITH THIS POSITIVE AIM IN MIND, I RECOMMEND THAT WE CALL UPON THE GOVERNORS OF OUR STATES TO CREATE A BI-STATE POLICY TASK FORCE AND TO CHARGE IT WITH CONSIDERING THE FOLLOWING:

TESTIMONY OF M. BURTON
SEPTEMBER 21, 1979
PAGE TWO

1. REVIEW THE STATUS AND FINDINGS OF THE VARIOUS STUDIES THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY.
2. AGREE ON CORRIDOR OBJECTIVES.
3. IDENTIFY OUTSTANDING TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE AND AIR QUALITY ISSUES THAT NEED RESOLUTION.
4. RECOMMEND ADDITIONAL WORK NECESSARY TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES AND RESOLVE THE ISSUES.

IT IS NOT MY INTENTION THAT THIS GROUP COME TOGETHER TO ENGAGE IN MORE STUDIES. OVER THE YEARS, BETWEEN US WE HAVE PROBABLY UNDERTAKEN MORE INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE STUDIES THAN WE CARE TO ADMIT.

IT IS NOW TIME FOR AGREEMENT, FOR DETERMINING AN OFFICIAL COURSE OF ACTION THAT WILL RESULT IN THE SUBSTANTIVE SOLUTIONS WE ARE SEEKING IN THE I-5 CORRIDOR. WHAT ARE THE REAL CAUSES OF THE CORRIDOR PROBLEMS? HOW CAN A "PACKAGE" OF PROJECTS BE DEFINED WHICH ADEQUATELY RESPONDS TO THE NEEDS OF WASHINGTON AND OREGON? HOW CAN WE PLAN FOR NEW SERVICES THAT MEET OTHER THAN DOWNTOWN TO DOWNTOWN NEEDS? IF THE RANGE OF PROJECTS NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION IS NOT ADEQUATE, HOW DO WE MOUNT THE FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL RESOURCES TO CONSIDER LARGER-SCALE PROJECTS SUCH AS A THIRD BRIDGE OR A MASS TRANSPORTATION SOLUTION?

I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE WITH YOU A DOCUMENT THAT DESCRIBES IN GREATER DETAIL THE METROPOLITAN SERVICE DISTRICT PROPOSAL FOR THE BI-STATE TASK FORCE. I HAVE ALSO BEEN ASKED BY SENATOR STEVEN KAFOURY, A MEMBER OF THE OREGON SENATE'S TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE, WHO WAS INVITED BY YOUR COMMITTEE TO GIVE TESTIMONY TODAY BUT WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND, TO STATE FOR THE RECORD THAT HE ENDORSES THE PROPOSAL I HAVE INTRODUCED.

TESTIMONY OF M. BURTON

SEPTEMBER 21, 1979

PAGE THREE

IN CONCLUSION I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO PRESENT THESE COMMENTS TODAY. AS ELECTED OFFICIALS REPRESENTING OUR NEIGHBORING CONSTITUENCIES, WE MUST RAISE THE KINDS OF QUESTIONS BEING DISCUSSED TODAY AND PROVIDE ANSWERS FOR THEM. LET US, THROUGH THE AUTHORITY OF STATE GOVERNMENT, BRING OUR SEPARATE RESOURCES TOGETHER TO FORM AN EVEN STRONGER SOLUTION-PRODUCING ALLIANCE THAN HAS BEEN POSSIBLE IN THE PAST.