



**Testimony by Wilsonville Mayor Tim Knapp in Support of SB 256-3:
*Establishes the Willamette Falls Locks Commission***

Scheduled for public hearing on June 14, 2017, before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

Co-Chairs Johnson and Gomberg and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Wilsonville City Council, I am testifying in support of SB 256-3 that establishes the Willamette Falls Locks Commission as the policy-making and advisory body for issues relating to repair, reopening, operation, maintenance and future transfer of ownership of the navigational canal and locks, a transportation facility of state significance.

The City of Wilsonville is a founding member of the Willamette Falls Locks Working Group and welcomes the opportunity to serve on the proposed Commission. Local governments, businesses and advocates have been working collaboratively together and are requesting the State to become a partner through the formation of the Commission. With representation from ODOT, State Parks and Business Oregon on the Commission, the future economic, transportation, cultural, historic, recreational and emergency preparedness interests of the region and state are fully represented.

The passage of SB 256 is critical in this legislative session. In the Draft Disposition Study issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in May 2017 for public comment, the Corps indicated a preference for transfer of the Locks. Recommending a governance structure for a transferee and negotiating with the Corps for transfer of the Locks upgraded to an acceptable state of repair are critical if the Locks are to be reopened. If a transferee is not identified, the Corps has indicated a preference to construct a concrete bulkhead, which would close the Locks permanently to river traffic — and foreclose future options for use.

The City of Wilsonville has vested interests along with other stakeholders in reopening and sustainably operating the Willamette Falls Locks, which significantly impact the recreational, tourism and commercial economy of the community and the region. Closure of the Locks since 2011 has placed a severe hardship on commercial, recreational and tribal river users, including area recreationalists and businesses. Wilsonville-based Wilsonville Concrete, Inc., and Marine Industrial Construction, LLC, which used the Willamette Falls Locks for 127 years for transporting aggregate, logs and other goods and conducting dredging and towing operations, has 15–30 jobs that could be impacted if the Locks are not reopened on a permanent basis for the conduct of commerce.

The City of Wilsonville respectfully urges a DO PASS vote on SB 256-3. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Knapp".

Tim Knapp, Mayor
City of Wilsonville