



NEXT Renewable Fuels Inc Testimony

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To: Jacyn Normine <Jacyn.Normine@columbiacountyor.gov>

To Whom It May Concern,

I am 4th generation resident of Clatskanie Oregon.

When considering the siting of a plant the size of NEXT Renewable Fuels, logistics play an important role. Many of the servicing professionals and businesses that NEXT will be requiring for its construction and its crucial uninterrupted running, after construction, are located in Longview, Washington.

When the Lewis and Clark bridge was completed, linking Washington State with Oregon in 1930, the population of Longview was 5,500 and two lanes were adequate. Now, 92 years later we have the same two lanes. The population of both States have increased many fold and trucks are 4 times the size of those in the 1930s. The population of Longview has grown to 85,000. There are no large ferries crossing the Columbia anymore. Traffic is often stopped for long periods of time on this bridge due to: accidents, congestion, and bridge maintenance. Emergency vehicles sometimes have difficulty crossing. There is a bridge that crosses the mouth of the Columbia River at its mouth by Astoria, but the road there, from Longview, is long with many curves.

Thousands of people from Washington State, British Columbia, Portland and elsewhere use this bridge as the shortest route to the beautiful Oregon Coast. Because more large box stores are being built along the North Oregon Coast and its population is increasing more trucks are using the bridge. Thousands of Washington residents use the bridge monthly to buy hundreds of thousands of dollars worth, if not millions of dollars worth, of low tax Oregon cigarettes monthly.

If Columbia County is serious about developing a huge complex at Port Westward I believe an emphasis should be placed on finding funds for a four if not a 6 lane replacement bridge. It is unbelievable that a bridge designed for traffic 90 years ago is still deemed adequate today.

Sincerely,

John G. Lillich