

Timeline of Senator Murray's Work on I-5 Bridge Replacement Project

Patty Murray has been the leading Congressional champion of the I-5 Bridge Replacement Project—formerly called the Columbia River Crossing—for decades, going back to her work in the state legislature. She has stuck by this project over the years and leveraged her position as a senior appropriator, Chair and Ranking Member of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, and now, Chair of the full Senate Appropriations Committee, to secure federal funding for the project at every possible opportunity.

Senator Murray has had many conversations over the past three years with the Biden administration where she has forcefully made the case for major federal investment in the I-5 Bridge Replacement Project, including in multiple discussions with Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg.

Below is an abbreviated timeline of Senator Murray's work to secure funding for I-5 Bridge Replacement:

- **1992:** Sen. Murray begins discussing the need to replace the I-5 bridge with Oregon Senator and fellow appropriator Mark Hatfield.
- **August 2003:** Sen. Murray [holds a field hearing](#) in Vancouver on transportation issues in the region, specifically emphasizing the importance of replacing the I-5 bridge. Her remarks are [here](#).
- **March 2004:** In a forum with business and community leaders at the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, Sen. Murray [highlights her support](#) for robust transportation reauthorization legislation that provides funding for the I-5 bridge replacement.
- **July 2005:** Sen. Murray announces [\\$8 million](#) in federal funding for preliminary engineering and an Environmental Impact Statement to explore Columbia River Crossing options within the I-5 corridor.
- **February 2009:** Sen. Murray secures [\\$1.3 million](#) for the Columbia River Crossing project in the 2009 government funding package.
- **July 2009:** Sen. Murray passes the Fiscal Year 2010 Transportation-Housing bill out of the Senate Appropriations Committee with a provision [she wrote](#) updating the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) evaluation process for multimodal projects like the Columbia River Crossing, allowing all non-federal contributions to a project to be considered in the FTA's Capital Investment Grants rating process and making multimodal projects more competitive for federal funding. The provision [passed into law](#) as part of government funding legislation later that year. The Washington State Department of Transportation is relying on this authority today as part of the transit component of the [I-5 Bridge Replacement project](#).
- **December 2009:** Sen. Murray secures [\\$1.9 million](#) for the completion of the Environmental Impact Statement and design for the Columbia River Crossing project, and the FTA provision in the final Fiscal Year 2010 government funding bill.
- **February 2010:** Sen. Murray [publicly urges](#) Oregon and Washington legislators to unite behind a plan to replace the I-5 Bridge and warns that local disagreements could put federal funding at risk.
 - The Columbian: [Time now to make tough decisions on I-5 bridge, Murray says](#)
- **July 2010:** Sen. Murray secures [\\$42 million](#) for the Columbia River Crossing project in the committee-passed draft funding bill for Fiscal Year 2011.
- **April 2012:** Sen. Murray secures [\\$39 million](#) for the Columbia River Crossing in the committee-passed draft appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2013.
- **February 2013:** Sen. Murray slams the decision by Clark County commissioners to pull funding from the Columbia River Economic Development Council due to the Council's support of the CRC project.
 - The Columbian: [Senator Murray slams anti-CRC move](#)
- **June 2013:** In an [Op-Ed in The Seattle Times](#), Sen. Murray calls on state legislators in Olympia to provide Washington state's share of the funding for the Columbia River Crossing project.

- **June 2013:** Sen. Murray chairs a Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on our nation's crumbling infrastructure and speaks about the urgent need to secure funding for the Columbia River Crossing project.
 - Video of the hearing is [here](#) and a transcript is [here](#).
- **June 2013:** Sen. Murray passes the Fiscal Year 2014 Transportation-Housing bill out of the Senate Appropriations Committee with \$65 million in federal funding for the Columbia River Crossing project.
- **August 2013:** Senator Murray continues to be vocal in her support for reviving the I-5 bridge project, saying: *"The investment that we've made is extremely critical... it should not go to waste, and we ought to look at every possibility to try and make sure this bridge gets replaced."*
 - The Columbian: [Sen. Murray: Let's get moving on infrastructure](#)
- **January 2014:** Senator Murray [secures \\$65 million](#) in federal funding for the Columbia River Crossing project in the end-of-year government funding bill for Fiscal Year 2014.
 - The Columbian: [Sen. Murray touts \\$65 million for CRC](#)
- **February 2016:** Senator Murray meets with state officials in Olympia and expresses her support for efforts that move the region closer to replacing the I-5 bridge, underscoring that the replacement project must be done in a collaborative way with broad agreement from stakeholders on both sides of the river working to address the needs of the I-5 corridor.
- **September 2017:** Rep. Herrera Beutler passes an amendment to the House Fiscal Year 2018 Transportation-Housing bill to prevent any federal funding from being used to establish or collect tolls on I-205 and I-5 in Oregon or Washington.

On September 22, Senator Murray [writes a letter](#) to Oregon Governor Kate Brown voicing concerns she heard from constituents in Southwest Washington [and urging](#) the State of Oregon to undertake an open and transparent process when implementing value pricing requirements. The letter also discussed the need for a new I-5 crossing and encouraged continued regional discussions on a new I-5 crossing.

 - The Columbian: [Sen. Murray asks Gov. Brown for toll voting privileges](#)

On September 25, The Oregon Transportation Commission [responds to](#) Senator Murray fulfilling her requests to elevate WSDOT to a voting member of the Portland Region Value Pricing Policy Advisory Committee and adding the City of Vancouver to the Committee as a voting member.

 - The Columbian: [Oregon invites Vancouver into toll discussion](#)
- **January 2017:** Senator Murray meets with WSDOT Secretary Roger Millar to receive an update on efforts to replace the I-5 bridge.
- **November 2017:** Southwest Washington legislators [write to Senator Murray](#) sharing their progress at the state level on I-5 bridge replacement efforts.
- **January 2018:** Senator Murray meets with City of Vancouver Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle to receive an update on the I-5 bridge replacement efforts.
- **March 2018:** The end-of-year government funding bill for Fiscal Year 2018 is released and does not include Rep. Herrera Beutler's tolling amendment.
- **August 2018:** Sen. Murray writes a [second letter](#) to Oregon Governor Kate Brown in response to the recommendations from the Portland Region Value Pricing Policy Advisory Committee, [emphasizing](#) the importance of evaluating how the recommendations would impact efforts by the States of Oregon and Washington on a new I-5 crossing.
- **December 2018:** Senator Murray provides a memo to Washington State Senator Annette Cleveland outlining different federal competitive grant programs which could support portions of the I-5 bridge replacement effort.
- **October 2019:** Murray expresses her strong and unflinching support for [moving ahead](#) on a second effort to replace the I-5 Bridge.

- **November 2021:** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is [signed into law](#). As Assistant Majority Leader, Sen. Murray [helped negotiate and pass](#) the historic legislation—which created the [Mega Grant Program](#)—and as a senior appropriator, Sen. Murray played a key role in authoring the sections of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that funded specific transportation programs, including Mega. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provided \$5 billion in advance appropriations funding over five years for the Mega Grant Program, including \$1.8 billion in advance appropriations for the program in Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024—this is where the Mega Grant funding just announced for the I-5 Bridge Replacement Project is coming from.
- **February 2022:** Sen. Murray receives an update on the I-5 Bridge Replacement Project from WSDOT Secretary Roger Millar.
- **March 14, 2023:** Sen. Murray speaks with Secretary Buttigieg about the project in a call prior to his appearance before the Senate Appropriations Committee’s Transportation Subcommittee [hearing](#) on President Biden’s budget request for Fiscal Year 2024.
- **March 22, 2023:** Sen. Murray again [meets with](#) WSDOT Secretary Roger Millar about the project.
- **March 23, 2023:** Senator Murray calls out the importance of completing the I-5 Bridge Replacement Project in the Senate Appropriations Committee’s Transportation Subcommittee [hearing](#) with Secretary Buttigieg, [saying](#): *“The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law we passed laid a really good strong foundation for an infrastructure decade—and now, we have to build on it to make sure we can complete the projects in our communities that are so badly needed, like the I-5 Bridge Project in southwest Washington, you’re well aware of.”*
- **August 28, 2023:** Sen. Murray joins the entire Washington state Congressional delegation in a [letter](#) requesting funding from the Mega Grants Program for the I-5 Bridge Replacement Project.
- **November 14, 2023:** Sen. Murray calls Secretary Buttigieg to specifically advocate once again for Mega Grant Program funding for the I-5 Bridge Replacement Project.