

SB 5544

**Oregon Department of Transportation Budget
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation
and Economic Development**

April 1, 2013

Ann Hanus

The Association of Oregon Counties strongly supports the Governor's Recommended 2013-15 budget for the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). AOC and ODOT have forged a strong partnership to ensure we have an interconnected and viable transportation system. ODOT is recognized as an innovative leader among states for the excellent working relationships with their local governments and stakeholders.

Our partnership involves not only shared funding agreements but also collaborating closely on regional and statewide levels through participation on the Area Commissions on Transportation and various statewide boards, commissions, and task forces. Counties work closely with ODOT and the Oregon Transportation Commission to identify projects for the Statewide Improvement Program (STIP) and for various programs and projects such as Connect Oregon, bridges, paving, the Federal Lands Access Program and Public Transit.

We have greatly appreciated the technical advice offered by ODOT as well as the opportunities to share maintenance crews, equipment and resources. By doing so, we leverage our resources, stretch them further and are more efficient in our efforts to care for our transportation infrastructure.

AOC believes it is critical that the Legislature approve a major transportation funding package in the 2015 biennium to address large and growing infrastructure needs not only statewide but also for local governments. Without a significant funding package, we will see a significant reduction in modernization projects because of the need to fund the debt service for the I-5 bridge (which AOC supports) and lower than expected fuel tax revenues on both the state and federal levels. We will be unable to maintain our existing infrastructure resulting in deterioration and higher expenses to reconstruct roads and bridges. The consequences will result in lowering our competitiveness and hampering our ability to move people and freight.