



PETER COURTNEY
President of the Senate

Senate Business and Transportation Committee

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair
Senator Bruce Starr, Vice-Chair
Senator Chris Edwards
Senator Fred Girod
Senator Chuck Thomsen

*TESTIMONY BY SENATOR PETER COURTNEY
SUPPORTING SB 276
FEBRUARY 12, 2013*

Chair Lee Beyer, Vice-Chair Bruce Starr, members of the Business and Transportation Committee, thank you for hearing my testimony today.

My name is Peter Courtney. I am a State Senator. I live in NE Salem.

During the February 2012 legislative session, I sponsored SB 1591, along with my distinguished colleague, the Senator from Hood River. This bill charged the Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) with the responsibility of managing the majority of Oregon's Rest Areas to ensure that they are clean, safe, and welcoming for both residents and visitors' use.

OTE is doing a remarkable job. Little things like this define us as a people and as a state. In Oregon, we take great pride in having beautiful parks, litter-free highways, and clean rest areas – the last of which Oregon Travel Experience is responsible for after the enactment of SB 1591.

With that additional responsibility, the legislature also entrusted the agency with constitutionally protected highway funds to carry out that mission. As a result of the increased responsibility and appropriated resources, the Oregon Travel Experience has taken significant steps to demonstrate that it is a good steward of those highway funds, in addition to the other fund revenues that it already manages.

The agency wishes to make its operation transparent and has put safeguards in place to make sure that funds are used properly. As such, SB 276 was requested by the Oregon Travel Experience to further demonstrate that the legislature's trust was well placed.

As a semi-independent state agency, its budget does not go through the legislative process, but if SB 276 is enacted, the Oregon Travel Experience will be required to conduct an annual financial review and report its findings back to the legislature on an annual basis.

As servants of the people, it is our duty to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent prudently. This bill is a standard oversight measure to do just that. I respectfully request you support this bill.
Thank you.