

## Testimony to the Senate Business & Transportation Committee on HB 2311

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**Angela Crowley-Koch, Legislative Director  
Oregon Environmental Council**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council serves on the STIP Stakeholder Committee and is strongly opposed to the -1 amendments to HB 2311. The STIP Stakeholder Committee is comprised of a wide variety of transportation stakeholders, from trucking interests to auto interests to city and county interests to environmental interests, among others, all of whom worked with enthusiasm and diligence to develop suggested updates to the STIP criteria based on legislative intent in HB 2001 of 2009. The Oregon Transportation Commission adopted new criteria based on this stakeholder input and is making decisions about how to invest the state's limited transportation dollars based on a well-rounded set of criteria, which take into account important economic, environmental and social goals.

The original version of HB 2311 adds just one new criterion: improves connectivity between different modes of transportation. This is a reasonable new criterion, which OEC supports.

We do not, however, support the removal of the other criteria as outlined in the -1 amendments, especially the removal of:

- Is capable of being implemented to reduce the need for additional highway projects. Why don't we support its removal? Because the state does not have the resources to continue to build new roads, a strategy that does not solve the problem of congestion over the long run. There are many less expensive ways to increase the capacity of existing transportation infrastructure.
- Fosters livable communities by demonstrating that the investment does not undermine sustainable urban development. Why don't we support its removal? Because transportation affects land use, and land use affects transportation. The two are inextricably linked. We must ensure that land use decisions support transportation objectives and vice versa.
- Enhances the value of transportation projects through designs and development that reflect environmental stewardship and community sensitivity. Why don't we support its removal? Because the way we design transportation infrastructure has a huge impact on the environment and on the communities served by that

infrastructure. All projects must minimize stormwater runoff, for example, and be sensitive to the neighborhoods in which they are located.

- Is consistent with the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals and reduces this state's dependence on foreign oil. Why don't we support its removal? Because the transportation sector is responsible for more than one-third of Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions. We must incorporate global warming impacts into transportation planning decisions by applying least-carbon-cost planning to all transportation investments.

Please do not move forward with the -1 amendments. Thank you for your consideration.