



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor

Department of Transportation

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DATE: May 20, 2013

TO: Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

FROM: Paul Mather
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SUBJECT: HB 2277-A

INTRODUCTION

House Bill 2277-A requires the Oregon Department of Transportation to study the impacts of the use of studded tires on maintaining highways and report to the legislature.

BACKGROUND

Studded tires cause damage to roads and highways, and as a result, their use is limited in Oregon law to the winter season, between November 1 and April 1. Studded tires offer increased traction for motorists in icy conditions. Motorists may also use tire chains, studless snow tires or a vehicle with four-wheel drive in snow and ice conditions.

The most recent [study](#) ODOT conducted was in 2000 to determine the pavement wear and cost to repair studded tire damage. The study concluded that the state, cities and counties spend approximately \$11 million each year to repair studded tire damage, although the damage caused exceeds \$40 million each year.

DISCUSSION

HB 2277-A requires ODOT to undertake a study to determine the impacts of studded tire use on highway maintenance. The bill specifies the study should include the cost of maintenance attributable to studded tires, the number of studded tire and other winter tires used, and a review of other winter driving studies. It also requires the agency to recommend alternative measures road authorities could take to reduce studded tire use and their cost, while maintaining safety. HB 2277-A directs ODOT to consult with others, including the tire industry, in conducting its research and report back to the 2015 legislature.

The studded tire study would be funded through ODOT's research program funding for 2014. ODOT typically selects eight to 10 projects each year from a collection of 80-100 problem statements identified by staff. Projects are reviewed and approved by a research advisory committee made up of ODOT staff, and Portland State University and Oregon State University representatives; the Federal Highway Administration also approves ODOT's projects.

The study will provide more current information for ODOT and local governments about the impacts of studded tires on the costs to maintain highways and local roads. It should also inform the legislature's future conversations about studded tire use in Oregon.

SUMMARY

HB 2277-A requires ODOT to conduct a study about the impacts of the use of studded tires. The study should inform the legislature as they determine whether to make any studded tire policy changes for Oregon.