



## Road Department

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**April 15, 2015**

Senate Committee on Business and Transportation  
Attn: Chair Beyer, Vice-Chair Girod and Committee Members  
Hearing Room B

**RE: Testimony in favor of SB 668**

Dear Chair Beyer, Vice-Chair Girod and Committee Members,

County Road Departments have responsibility for and incur expense associated with the presence of utilities in county road rights-of-way. Utilities, on the other hand, receive tremendous benefit resulting from the operation and maintenance of a road system which provides both the physical space and direct access to their linear asset. Utility companies receive this benefit at no cost.

SB 668 provides a tool to manage the presence of utilities in county rights-of-way similar to the tool provided to cities and under which a majority of Oregon's utility rate payers are already participating.

SB 668 creates the option – at the individual discretion of each county – to establish a user fee associated with the operation and maintenance of the transportation system that provides space accommodation and access to private utilities.

SB 668 gives Oregon counties a tool in their toolbox that is becoming more and more necessary for many counties who have few opportunities otherwise to generate local funding for transportation system improvements and maintenance.

Deschutes County supports the creation of this tool, although it has not yet been determined if we will take immediate advantage of it. The tool, however, is absolutely necessary given the unreliability of transportation funding sources. With one fuel tax increase in the past 22 years, it is clear that localized funding mechanisms are necessary to maintain the community's most valuable asset – its transportation system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 668. Please support this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Chris Doty, PE  
Director of Public Works, Deschutes County