

Joint Statement on HB 2281-B7

*Transportation for America — Upstream Public Health — OPAL Environmental Justice
Oregon Environmental Council — Bicycle Transportation Alliance — 1000 Friends of Oregon*

Our organizations support a balanced transportation package that provides affordable, accessible, and safe transportation choices for all Oregonians. We support funding mechanisms and policy changes that will create safer neighborhoods with better access to jobs, services, schools, healthy food and recreation. Therefore, in a legislative transportation package, we advocate for:

- ✓ Funding for safe sidewalks and streets as part of a statewide commitment to VisionZero—a goal of zero serious transportation injuries and fatalities.
- ✓ Funding for expansion of the walking and bicycling network.
- ✓ Equitable funding for transit operations.
- ✓ Sufficient funding for elderly and disabled transit.
- ✓ Statewide youth transit initiative.
- ✓ Fixing existing roads and bridges.

We appreciate the transportation funding proposal put forth by some legislators. But it is, and should be, a starting point for discussion with Oregonians, not the ending point, as the process thus far has been. In particular, we are concerned about the following.

- The proposed increases in vehicle registration and title fees are completely unrelated to how much someone drives, so they make no contribution to any transportation policy goals of reducing vehicle miles traveled or greenhouse gas emissions. They simply hit the poor harder, because the fees are a lump sum payment.
- The proposal raises \$80 million in five transit districts (Canby, Sandy, TriMet, Wilsonville, and Lane County). It is wonderful to see a bi-partisan group of legislators working to fund transit service that is so critical to many of Oregon's goals, but we have concerns. This proposal does nothing for transit in Oregon's six other metropolitan regions—Salem-Keizer, Rogue Valley, Corvallis, Bend, Albany and Milton-Freewater—or rural areas which also need improved transit service and the enhanced access to jobs and services that it supports. Furthermore, we believe the tax on individual employees needs to be evaluated for equity concerns; it is wholly untested and needs more vetting.
- The proposal does not provide sufficient funding for safe streets and sidewalks and for expansion of bicycle and walking facilities.
- The proposal does not specifically address the transit needs of elderly & disabled Oregonians or youth.
- It is unclear how much of the funds raised would go to fixing Oregon's existing bridges and roads, versus building new capacity. The more we add, the further behind we will get in maintaining and preserving what we have.

- The state began a bad precedent of earmarking projects within transportation packages in 2009, ignoring the fact that projects built with state money should be fully vetted within the Oregon Transportation Commission process based on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program criteria. This bill does the same, circumventing the Oregon Transportation Commission.

Finally, we believe that repeal of the Clean Fuels Program will make it impossible to meet the state's GHG reduction goals. Reducing GHGs from the transportation sector rests on a "three-legged stool": cleaner vehicle technologies; cleaner fuels; and reducing the number and length of motor vehicles trips. None of the legs of this three-legged stool can be dismissed. This package undermines the state's ability to achieve cleaner fuels and shifts the burden of reducing pollution from the oil industry to the citizens of Oregon.