

From: [Meeky Blizzard](#)
To: [JCT Exhibits](#)
Subject: SB 413
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 11:59:12 AM

April 10, 2019

Dear Co-Chair Lee Beyer, Co-Chair Caddy McKeown, and Members of the Joint Transportation Committee,

My name is Meeky Blizzard. I have been a resident of Washington County since 1978 and have been involved in local, regional, and national transportation and land use issues for more than 30 years. A few years ago, I served as Co-Chair of Washington County's Transportation Futures Study Advisory Committee.

I write to convey my opposition to SB 413, for these reasons:

- Oregon does not need the creation of a special taxing district to finance the acquisition, design, construction, installation, operation, maintenance, and repair of limited-access public highway projects. We already have an accepted and robust process for identifying and building needed transportation projects – a process that involves affected jurisdictions and adheres to the state's land use planning program and environmental laws. Creating new transportation districts that reduce a county's authority over its own land use plans and eliminates an MPO's ability to review or approve a new public highway makes absolutely no sense.
- Oregonians are driving less. From 1999 – 2013, even as the state's population increased exceeded the national average and our growth in GDP was among the highest in the nation, and vehicle registrations increased by 17%, both personal and total VMT (vehicles miles traveled) declined. In the Portland metro region, modest investments in transit, bicycling, and sidewalk improvements from 2000 – 2010 resulted in only a 4% increase in driving alone to work in spite of a 17% increase in commuters.
- The improvements in transit, bicycle, and pedestrian investments authorized by the Transportation Act of 2017 provide Oregonians throughout the state with increased opportunities to travel without burdening existing roadways with additional traffic. Evidence from metropolitan regions around the US has clearly demonstrated that building new limited-access highways to ease traffic flow doesn't reduce congestion; it only opens new avenues for people to drive further. Do we really want people to make longer commutes – at the expense of some of the best farmland in the nation?
- The construction of new limited-access highways flies in the face of

technology that is already transforming the way we think about travel and transportation. How can we justify investing billions of dollars in new freeways – whether publicly or privately financed – that won't be operational for at least 20 years, when technological advances such as self-driving cars, vehicle-to-vehicle communication, shared vehicles are already impacting travel behavior. With even more technological change coming at us at an accelerated pace, why do we continue to think that the mid-20th Century solution of simply building more freeways will solve our rapidly evolving transportation needs?

I urge you to Vote No on SB 413.

Sincerely,

Meeky Blizzard

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