



April 20, 2021

Joint Committee on Transportation
VIA OLIS Submission

Re: HB 2342

Chair McLain, Chair Beyer, Co-Chairs Noble & Boquist, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2342. As you know, counties maintain and operate the majority of the state's transportation facilities, and we are reliant on a number of sources to pay for the cost to keep these roads safe and sound. However, the resources that cover these roads are not able to keep up with the costs increases and needs over time. Some of that is related to cost drivers increasing, but the revenue picture is also not sufficiently stable. Gas tax revenues are an area where we are seeing a steady decline as the vehicle inventory increasing efficiency over time leading to fewer gallons sold.

Washington County has worked hard to find alternatives revenues to the state's gas tax to meet our need. We have asked our community to provide the resources through a set aside of our property taxes, development fees, and registration fees. This, along with the increased investment through the state's increase in the gas tax in 2017, has helped but we still need a stabilized revenue picture to be successful in the future. Therefore, Washington County Board of Commissioners legislative priorities for 2021 is to establish a sustainable, long-term revenue solution that support the multi-modal transportation system. HB 2342 is a step in that direction.

As we continue to review the details of the bill and the proposed amendments, we will continue to support efforts that have equity built into the structure of the program as well as provide a long-term solution to finding sufficient revenues to support our multi-modal system.

Respectfully,

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