



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Dec 2, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Nathanson and Frederick, and members of the Subcommittee,

My name is Khanh Pham, and I'm the State Representative for Oregon House District 46. First, I want to thank you for your leadership serving on this committee and spending your Saturday morning and afternoon, listening to the public. I want to thank the community members who showed up today and shared with us their vision for Oregon's streets. After listening to the community this morning and this afternoon, I think it's clear that we as legislators have the opportunity and the responsibility to provide for communities' most urgent needs.

The needs of my community here in the Jade District aren't that different from those in other districts around the state. We need to fix our pothole-filled streets, we need to address traffic safety, and we need to provide transportation options that protect our planet and clean our air. I believe that tolling or congestion pricing **can** be an important tool to manage congestion and fund important transportation needs, but the key lies in **how it's implemented and what the toll revenue will be used for**. I'm concerned that the current ODOT tolling proposals don't address the concerns I'm hearing from constituents.

The goal of tolling should be to minimize congestion, not to maximize revenue. We as legislators must direct ODOT to study and provide us with an opportunity for tolling to be as **minimal as possible** to remove all traffic congestion, not as a new slush fund for freeway expansion in other parts of the region. Secondly, to be responsive to community needs, the toll revenue needs to go to **fund sidewalks in East Portland**, basic maintenance like **filling the potholes** in East Portland streets, and **investing in transit infrastructure**, not in bloated freeway expansion.

East Portlanders are suffering from decades of disinvestment in our transportation system. If we're going to start charging motorists to drive on the freeway, our communities need to also see the benefit. Tolling revenue must make our community whole, particularly the communities like those along 82nd Ave, where much of the traffic will be diverted. We need to use this toll revenue to help fund sidewalks, crosswalks, safe routes to school, and investments in other orphan highways like SE Powell.

I echo the concerns of community groups that an equitable low-income program must provide transportation options. Giving low income folks a pass to drive without a toll doesn't do much for the low-income family without a car. Lastly, tolling should be implemented on any freeway before expansion, so we don't have to charge high tolls to pay back unnecessary debt taken on to overbuild freeway lanes that we may not need once low-cost tolls are implemented.

But more than policy proposals, what I'm really here today to ask for is your leadership. I know you heard a lot of testimony today, from constituents understandably frustrated that our state is not making the investments in healthy, safe, fiscally responsible, climate-smart transportation. We as legislators need to pass policy that directs ODOT to prioritize our

resources appropriately and invest in the transportation system our communities need. We have the opportunity to provide the **decisive leadership necessary** to deliver safer streets, and better transportation options. In the months ahead, I look forward to partnering with each of you to hold our legislature and ODOT accountable to giving Oregonians the transportation system they deserve. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Khanh Pham". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Representative Khanh Pham