

From:

Sarah Risser

What do you want to tell legislators about the proposed \$1.9 Billion Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion and Oregon's transportation system?

We are currently faced with two very concerning problems: a climate crisis and a road fatality crisis. Vehicular traffic contributes disproportionately to climate collapse and vehicular traffic is the sole cause of our road fatality crisis. The last thing we need at this time is an astronomically expensive freeway expansion that will perpetuate and exacerbate these problems. At this time we need to invest in solutions.

I am pro-toll because I believe the cost of driving should begin to reflect the true costs that a private-vehicle-centric transit system imposes on our local and regional communities. Toll revenue should not be spent on widening a freeway – more lanes have been proven time and again to do nothing to address congestion. Toll revenues should be spent on ensuring every citizen who lives in the state of Oregon has robust alternatives to driving their car. For many, car ownership is too expensive or financially burdensome. Many others – like me – want nothing more than to permanently leave their car behind and use active or public transportation networks instead. Toll revenues should be directed at solutions not problems. Toll revenues should be invested in biking and walking infrastructure, something that is desperately needed in the region, in addition to shoring up public transportation. Toll revenues should be invested in a way that ensures our transportation system has many viable alternatives. This will benefit everyone, including those who continue to drive.

I write as a member of Families for Safe Streets. Road fatalities are directly correlated with the amount of traffic on the road. Expanding a freeway will increase vehicular traffic and increase road fatalities. Road fatalities are also correlated with the size of vehicles on the road – the total kinetic energy. Toll fees should be correlated with the size and weight of the vehicle. Larger, more dangerous and polluting, vehicles should pay more than smaller, more efficient and less dangerous vehicles.

Thank you for listening

Sarah Risser, Henry Zietlow's mom (11/30/2000 – 1/14/2019) Henry died of severe head trauma after the negligent driver of a Dodge Ram Truck hit the vehicle he was driving on a highway.