

# WILSONVILLE

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## AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Submitted for the public hearing on December 14th 2023, before the  
Joint Committee on Transportation Special Committee on Transportation Planning

### Seeking a balanced, comprehensive approach to transportation funding

The Wilsonville Area Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to fostering economic prosperity in the south metro region. We are deeply invested in the well-being of both our businesses and every individual who works within our community. The current proposed tolling program by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is not just about business freight mobility issues; but also directly affects the daily lives of our workforce, influencing their commute, job satisfaction, and ultimately their livelihood. Recognizing the need for effective and sustainable transportation funding, we also understand the importance of ensuring that any new initiatives, such as tolling, are equitable and beneficial for all members of our community, including the diverse range of businesses we represent and every individual who contributes to our region's economic vitality.

We understand that the current reliance on gas tax revenue is insufficient and support the exploration of alternative funding mechanisms.

However, we have significant concerns regarding the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) reliance on tolling. Our concerns are:

1. **Focus on Revenue over Congestion Relief:** The primary objective mandated by Oregon House Bill 2017, was to alleviate congestion. Unfortunately, the current focus of ODOT's proposal appears to be predominantly on revenue generation rather than effectively addressing traffic congestion. This shift in focus is a departure from the bill's original intent and raises concerns about the proposal's alignment with community needs.
2. **Traffic Diversion and Safety Concerns:** Citizens along with local and county government have raised serious concerns that the tolling on I-5 and I-205 will lead to substantial traffic diversion onto local roads. This diversion poses significant safety and environmental risks to our local cities and neighborhoods. Despite ODOT's and the Joint Transportation Committee's ongoing work since 2017, the lack of a clear solution to this critical issue is troubling. Proceeding forward with a tolling plan without adequately addressing local traffic diversion solutions (versus under review and study) is not acceptable.

3. **Disproportional Impact not equitable:**

Tolling that implements in only a limited region of the Portland metropolitan region stands to disproportionately, and negatively impact business growth and viability in the limited region that is tolled. As the south metro region invests in infrastructure for future commercial and industrial development, in places such as Day Road in Wilsonville, tolling stands to put the south metro region at a competitive disadvantage and jeopardizes a return on investment into infrastructure.

Additionally, we urge for more transparency and scrutiny regarding the financial aspects of the tolling program. It is essential to understand the cost-effectiveness of the program, especially in terms of administrative expenses versus the actual funds allocated for maintenance and construction of roadways.

In light of these concerns, we have for the past year advocated for a pause in the current tolling proposal. We are very disheartened that despite the Governor's request for a pause it has not had any meaningful change in direction for ODOT and the Joint Transportation Committee's full steam ahead with what is still a flawed tolling program.

Therefore, in light of this pause not being taken seriously, we find it advisable to recommend the support of measure IP-4:Vote Before Tolls in order to safeguard business, workers and community interests.

We call for a collaborative effort to develop a more equitable and comprehensive transportation plan that genuinely addresses congestion relief, ensures safety, and is financially transparent and efficient.

We stand ready today to engage in constructive dialogue with ODOT, local and state officials, and other stakeholders to find a balanced and effective solution for our transportation system's funding and management.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kevin Ferrasci O'Malley, CEO". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the last name "O'Malley" being particularly prominent.

Kevin Ferrasci O'Malley, CEO

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