

Dear Transportation Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comments about the I-205 tolling project and for your service to this important issue. I was signed up to testify on Saturday at Gladstone High School but had to leave before my time to speak was announced. So, this letter serves as my testimony to the committee.

There are two areas I wish to cover: one is personal, and one addresses the larger community.

I am a resident of West Linn, having moved here about 18 months ago for the better schools and better quality of life compared to our experience in NE Portland. My wife works at Kaiser Sunnyside and uses the 205 nearly every day. I work from home and use the 205 for errands and activities 3-4 times per week. The ways we use 205 in our week-to-week lives include my wife to commuting to work at Kaiser, Home Depot for DIY house projects, the transfer station in Oregon City for trash and recycling, landscape supply for landscape projects, pharmacy for prescriptions and goods, dental and medical appointments for kids and adults, groceries, pickleball, visiting friends and family in NE Portland, and traveling towards Mt Hood and Hood River.

Every time we do one of these activities, with tolling, it would cost us \$5 more round trip. And what happens when they inevitably raise rates? As the fees go up, our quality will go down.

This is an example of the financial impact personally. Still, I think perhaps more far-reaching is how the tolls could affect commerce and the businesses that operate in this area. I can predict these detrimental consequences of tolling on businesses:

Small business owners who do not live between the bridges have to personally shell out \$5 each time they cross, which could be more than a typical work commuter's five days a week.

Employees living outside the two bridge area would pay more to come to work. This could shrink the already strained applicant pool as potential staff from outside the zone avoid working within the zone.

Customers who live outside the toll area are likely to find options outside the zone so they do not have to pay the toll. This further erodes the businesses.

In general, the toll in this limited area could create a dead zone for commerce, clog I-5 more as people avoid the 205, and push the primary financial burden onto those who live locally and have no other options but to use the bridges.

Something else that struck me yesterday is that we are still having this conversation after three years. ODOT knows there is strong opposition, and the transportation committee knows there is strong opposition, yet the state continues to ask for citizen input, which has remained consistent. Why have no other funding alternatives been presented to us? We know our roads need funding to upgrade them, so please find a way to fund the repairs without putting the burden on a few local communities.

Lastly, West Linn Mayor Rory Bialostosky cited perhaps the most damning evidence against the tolling project by analyzing data from a public records request: the vast majority (90%) of the tolling fee drivers would go to vendors and consultants vs. actually paying for the road. Other presenters cited something

like 60%. So, let's say the most accurate amount averages those two. That would mean that about 25 cents of every dollar a user pays would go the road repair. This is an egregious and inefficient use of our money. I do not mind paying taxes and fees for the public good, but not like this.

A small tax on all Oregonians under the age of 67 and above the poverty level would certainly be much more dollar-efficient and lucrative than what has been proposed. And could bring money in for all of our roads vs paying out-of-state vendors and consultants to suck more money out of our local economies.

Thank you for your time, and please find alternatives to address our road issues in Oregon and force ODOT to comply.

Sincerely,

Spencer Crandall

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