

Valerie Wilson
(former) Vice President of Operations and Policy
Visit Bend
Oregon Travel Information Council



To: Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation

From: Valerie Wilson
Visit Bend
Oregon Travel Information Council

Date: August 28th, 2024

Re: Sustainable Funding for Safe, Well-Maintained, and Accessible Safety Rest Areas Throughout the State

Co-Chairs McClain and Gorsek and Members of the Committee,

As a Travel Information Council (OTIC) member since 2020 - serving on the Rest Areas, Finance, and Executive Committees - and a staff member of Visit Bend, the official destination marketing organization for the City of Bend, since 2009, I feel that I truly understand the importance of providing a safe experience to those traveling throughout our state. Well-maintained, clean, safe rest areas that are accessible to all, are a key component of ensuring a quality experience for all travelers, including motorists, truck drivers, families, and tourists. I have seen and heard first-hand the appreciation from numerous travelers in our own Visitor Center, the majority of whom arrive to the Central Oregon area by driving.

The OTIC's mission to serve Oregon's visitors and local communities by providing safe rest areas, helpful highway signage, information historical markers, and heritage tree designations is extremely important, and I would urge you to prioritize a level of funding for the OTIC that will allow the organization to continue ensuring the safety and maintenance of Oregon's rest areas.

Sincerely,
Valerie Wilson
(Former) Vice President of Operations and Policy
Visit Bend