

Dear Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain and members of the Committee,

Our transportation system planning should focus on maintenance and operation of current facilities, on safety improvements to reduce injuries and fatalities, and on modernizing seismic resilience. As the funding streams on which we have depended are no longer keeping up, we need innovative solutions. We can reduce congestion by shifting a lot of travel from roads and streets to transit and active transportation. This infrastructure has been underfunded and is consequently underutilized. Such investment is cost-effective and promotes public health by reducing air pollution.

Since current funding for ODOT and for local jurisdictions depends largely on the dwindling income from the tax on gasoline sales, we must develop other funding streams. System planners must continue to actively educate and involve the public in this process, as you have done with this summer's Listening Sessions.

Indexing the gasoline tax to inflation is a common-sense action. Also, this tax rate should be increased now to compensate for lower revenue due to rising vehicle fuel efficiency. (Oregon's gas tax (\$0.40/gal) is currently lower than Washington's (\$0.494/gal) or California's (\$0.60/gal).) In addition, the payroll-tax-funded STIF could be increased to bolster monies for transit.

The funding option with the best potential for solving the fiscal gap is the Road User Charge (RUC, also referred to as a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) charge). Oregon has this funding mechanism in place in the OReGO program, though there has been little enrollment. A vehicle's annual mileage can be captured by a variety of mechanisms (via small tracking devices or accessing manufacturers' existing data streams). To ease privacy concerns, such mechanisms should report mileage but not location.

Oregon should fully fund the Electric Vehicle Rebate Program to meet the demand. As we electrify Oregon's vehicle fleet, we must resist even higher DMV fees for electric vehicles over gasoline vehicles, since this would discourage the transition away from internal-combustion vehicles.

Until we have adequate funding for O&M, transit and micromobility, we cannot afford huge expenditures on large highway projects. We need to require that such projects have secured full funding before construction

begins and must not create obligations to the General Fund. We should require emissions reductions with any costly project, following the lead of states like Colorado (Greenhouse Gas Standard for Transportation Planning).

Tolling of large projects will be necessary but needs to be designed as congestion pricing, i.e. structured to reduce driving at peak times and to reduce driving overall, encouraging mode-shifting to public transit and active transportation, in order to meet goals of speeding travel and reducing tailpipe emissions.

Other potential funding options include:

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- 2.
3. increasing DMV fees for all cars and trucks,
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. increasing sales taxes on all cars and trucks (and fees for registering vehicles purchased
8. out of state),
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- 10.
- 11.
12. imposing fees on retail delivery services or on transportation network companies (TNCs)
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- 14.
- 15.
16. imposing sales taxes on tires, graded according to tire weight and higher for studded
17. tires
- 18.

Following these principles will help us meet fiscal, safety, congestion and climate goals. Thank you for conducting these listening sessions and for considering our input,

Joseph Stenger MD, Co-Chair,
on behalf of The Transportation Committee
MCAT (Mobilizing Climate Action Together)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1r4DDA5unlzn2EPpzz904GJSPPARruTkXKT98DrdtTg/edit?usp=sharing>