



**Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Julie Fitzgerald on
Oregon Transportation Funding Issues and Priorities:**

***Consider Funding Options Like VMT Tax, Indexing to Inflation,
Leveraging Federal Funds to Advance I-5 Boone Bridge Project and
WES Wilsonville-to-Salem Extension Study for High-Capacity Transit***

Scheduled for public hearing on Sept. 26, 2024, before the
Joint Committee On Transportation at the City of Happy Valley

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain and members of the committee:

I am Julie Fitzgerald and I serve as Mayor of the City of Wilsonville. We operate the award-winning South Metro Area Regional Transit or SMART transit agency. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

I encourage the committee to consider a diverse array of funding options to secure Oregon's transportation future.

This includes a Vehicle Miles Traveled or VMT Tax as eventual replacement for gas-tax revenues. A VMT tax is equitable and similar to a gas tax: *the more mileage you drive, the more you pay.*

Index the gas tax, VMT tax and other transportation fees to inflation so as to maintain ODOT's buying power.

Gradually apply a VMT tax to Electric Vehicles so that they contribute their fair share to road funding while not reducing the rate of EV adoption.

All state transportation funding revenues should be used to leverage additional federal funding for our roads and public transportation.

Continue supporting the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund or STIF for public-transit improvements. This is an important source of funding for both intra- and inter-city transit mobility option that benefits commuting workers, low-income, youth and elderly residents — as well as our roads and environment.

I encourage you to maintain prior legislative commitments for Portland metro-area “mega highway projects,” including the I-5 Boone Bridge and Seismic Improvement Project of HB 3055.

Every day over 126,000 vehicles cross the I-5 Boone Bridge, which is nearly the same as the Columbia River Crossing I-5 Interstate Bridge, but with one-third more freight semi-trucks.

And over half of those trips are estimated to be commuting workers driving between the Portland metro and Salem/Keizer metro areas.

Finally, I urge you to fund the WES Commuter Rail Extension Study from Wilsonville to Salem with stops in Donald, Woodburn and Keizer as a high-capacity transit alternative to driving I-5.

Thank you.