

Please see attached Testimony.

Good evening Chair Gorsek, Chair McLain, Vice-Chairs and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

For the record, my name is Gerri Witthuhn. I live in Portland, and I'm here on behalf of Strong Towns PDX. Strong Towns focuses on making fiscally strong communities that are self-sustaining, resilient and nice to live in.

We know that Oregon is in a transportation budget crunch, and that we need to maximize every dollar. We need to value fiscal resiliency, not future growth and efficiency.

We believe that the 2025 transportation package should prioritize maintenance of our existing transportation infrastructure and prioritize safe, complete streets supporting active and public transit.

We can find funding for this by shelving the freeway expansion projects planned for the Portland Metro area. We cannot waste billions of dollars on this, when we have a years-long maintenance backlog; slow, unreliable public transit; and unsafe streets that put our lives at risk. We know from decades of research on induced demand that adding lanes won't fix our congestion; the only way to reduce congestion is to reduce use of single occupancy vehicles.

Additionally, freeways are a critical component of our infrastructure, but they don't need to run through our most valuable land—our city centers. Cities across Oregon are facing a budget crisis. Rather than using this land for housing, businesses, or public space, and gaining revenue from those uses, cities are losing money to freeways. Land is our most limited resource—it is the foundation of our state's prosperity, and we cannot squander it.

Please fund infrastructure maintenance, public and active transit, and the many great statewide and local programs waiting to be funded—not freeway expansions that most of the state won't even use. We need to be responsible with our dollars now, so that our family, friends, and neighbors can have resilient, safe, equitable, and climate-friendly transportation for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Gerri Witthuhn