

Submitter: Catherine Camp
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Interim Committee On Transportation
Funding
Measure, Appointment or LC 2
Topic:

Opposition Statement to Governor Kotek's Transportation Tax Increases

I strongly oppose Governor Tina Kotek's proposed transportation tax increases, set for the August 29, 2025, special session in Salem. The 6-cent gas tax hike, higher vehicle fees, EV surcharges, and doubled payroll tax will cost Oregon families over \$500 annually while failing to address the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) mismanagement.

ODOT's \$354 million deficit stems from poor planning, not insufficient revenue. From 2016–2024, ODOT added 362 positions costing \$211.87 million yearly, including DEI roles like a manager at up to \$11,373 monthly, while only pausing high-salary executive hires after public outcry. Yet, nearly 500 frontline workers—maintenance crews vital for pothole repairs and snow plowing—face layoffs, with no significant cuts to management. This prioritizes bureaucracy over public safety, especially in rural areas where highways could become impassable.

Oregon's \$140 billion budget offers alternatives like reprioritizing funds or paying down debt, as Republicans suggest, without new taxes. Rushing this session over Labor Day reflects poorly on Oregon's leadership. I urge lawmakers to reject these taxes, audit ODOT's spending, and protect frontline workers. No new taxes without real reform!

Sincerely, ? Catherine Camp, Portland