

Submitter:	Jennifer Niemann
On Behalf Of:	self
Committee:	Joint Interim Committee On Transportation Funding
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	LC 2

Governor Kotek and Transportation Committee members,
I am submitting written testimony to register my frustration with this session being called on behalf of ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation). As multiple representatives have explained countless times in session this year (Rep. Drazan, Rep. Bonham, Rep. Diehl, and Rep. Shelley Boshart-Davis, to name just a few), ODOT and Oregon do not have a budget problem; they have a spending problem. When the budget for ODOT still includes a line item for \$29.3M for their DEI office, there is no reason to call this session and demand \$5B from taxpayers. Especially when \$24.9M of the amount I previously mentioned is being taken from the State Highway Fund. Those funds are supposed to be used for the upkeep of the state's roads and transportation infrastructure, not a politician's slush fund to do with as they please.

Instead, I suspect that the actual reason for this session being called, and the real reason behind this proposed tax hike, is to help attempt to plug the ever-growing hole in the state's budget caused by PERS, which is now underfunded by \$28B as of the end of 2023. The legislature has known about this issue since we came to Oregon in 2002; multiple candidates for governor have proposed reasonable solutions, and none have gained traction. Former representatives have also proposed workable solutions to no avail.

Oregon in 2025 is a case study in government corruption, malfeasance, and contempt for her citizens. I sincerely hope that the next gubernatorial election will provide Oregonians seeking some fiscal accountability and sanity in Salem with a viable alternative to the current administration. In the meantime, Governor Kotek, I respectfully request that you remove your foot from the neck of my fellow Oregonians and remove your ever-present hand from their pockets.