

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

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed \$0.06 gas tax increase and the proposed increase in vehicle registration fees — both intended to address budget shortfalls at the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). If my understanding of the situation is inaccurate, I welcome clarification and verifiable information.

Based on my professional experience managing multi-million-dollar budgets in healthcare, I believe these shortfalls stem from poor planning, mismanagement, and lack of accountability — not from a lack of taxpayer funding.

Key Concerns

Primary Responsibility Neglected

ODOT's first obligation is to maintain and repair existing roads to safe, drivable standards for the public. Capital projects should come second. If funds are insufficient for core services, projects must be postponed — just as in the private sector.

Questionable Project Funding Practices

My understanding is that ODOT began multiple projects without having secured full funding, relying on “anticipated” sources such as COVID relief funds, toll revenues, or federal grants. This is risky and unsustainable.

Oversight and Accountability

The Legislature and federal government approve ODOT budgets. If true, has ODOT exceeded legislative authority?

Are ODOT administrators, directors, and managers held accountable for repeated budget overages?

Has any governor in the past decade taken meaningful corrective action when overages were reported?

Labor Force Concerns

If road maintenance has declined for years, why have layoffs only occurred in 2025?

Has there been any public report on staffing levels since 2015 or 2020?

If staffing greatly exceeds service needs, why hasn't the workforce been realigned?

Transparency and Auditing

Are ODOT's financial statements independently audited?

If overages were reported monthly, why were no immediate corrections made?

If overages were not reported, why not?

My Core Question

Why is this financial mismanagement being addressed by raising taxes rather than:

Cutting or postponing non-essential projects

Reducing administrative overhead

Conducting an external audit of ODOT's spending

Refocusing resources on ODOT's primary mission: maintaining safe, functional roads

Closing

Taxpayers should not bear the cost of years of poor planning and oversight. I urge Oregon's leadership to pursue internal reforms before seeking additional public funds.

Sincerely,

Duane ilg

dag4190@comcast.net

971-344-1467

Director of Radiation Oncology - retired