

Submitter: Gabriel Wihtol

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Interim Committee On Transportation  
Funding

Measure, Appointment or  
Topic: LC 2

Co-Chairs Wagner and Fahey and Members of the Committee,

My name is Gabriel Wihtol, and I live in Portland, OR. I am writing in to testify as neutral on LC 2.

I thank you for your work on this legislation that will help maintain Oregon's roads and ability to respond to crashes by keeping the lights on at ODOT this biennium.

I applaud the increase in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund to avoid job cuts and make sure transit services continue to be available to Oregonians, particularly as we face an affordability crisis and ballooning costs of private car ownership.

The inclusion of the 50/30/20 split will help ensure residents in all communities and all levels of government involved in transportation have the resources to maintain safety and stability for their respective systems.

However, I cannot support a package that has no new funding for Great Streets, Safe Routes to School or Oregon Community Paths. These are smart, high-return investments. Every dollar we spend today on sidewalks, multimodal connections, stoplights, and crosswalks saves money by reducing crashes and healthcare costs, and easing inflationary pressure on road construction budgets.

The epidemic of traffic fatalities and injuries on Oregon's streets are a crisis that cannot wait. ??Behind every statistic is inestimable loss, trauma, and a person who was loved by a family, friends and a wider community. We must work to ensure every neighborhood has safe streets for everyone, including those who can't or don't drive. We cannot continue to choose short-term budget band-aids that shift the burden of long-term costs to Oregon's working families and local governments. We cannot and will not wait to align spending with values, to treat safety as non-negotiable, and to build back public trust through clear accountability and real performance metrics. Oregonians like me are demanding a safety investment strategy for their streets. Thank you for your time and attention to these urgent needs.