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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Interim Committee On Transportation
Funding

Measure, Appointment or
Topic: LC 2

Opposition to New Transportation Taxes and Fees

Oregonians are being asked once again to open their wallets to fund a state agency that has proven time and again it cannot live within its means. The Oregon Department of Transportation does not have a revenue problem—it has a spending problem.

Billions of dollars have flowed through ODOT in recent years. Instead of focusing on the basic core mission—maintaining safe, reliable roads and highways—ODOT diverts resources into costly mass transit experiments, light rail dreams, bike lanes to nowhere, and endless “studies” that never fill a single pothole. At the same time, they claim “emergency” after “emergency” to justify raising taxes and fees on working Oregonians who are already stretched thin by rising costs of living.

Every Oregon household must budget. Every small business must live within its means. But ODOT refuses to do the same. It’s not fiscal responsibility when the answer to every shortfall is to raise gas taxes, tack on vehicle fees, and invent new charges for transportation “equity” and “climate” projects. It’s fiscal laziness—and it punishes the very people who depend on these roads the most.

ODOT has squandered public trust. Before a single dime in new revenue is demanded from taxpayers, ODOT should be required to conduct a full audit, prioritize spending toward road repair and safety, and cut wasteful or ideological projects that do nothing to solve the real problem.

The state of Oregon doesn’t need another tax increase. It needs accountability, transparency, and discipline at ODOT. Until that happens, raising taxes and fees is nothing more than rewarding failure and giving bureaucrats a blank check to continue down the pothole path to nowhere.

I strongly urge this committee and the legislature to reject new transportation taxes and fees. Demand ODOT do what every Oregon family already does: live within a budget.