

Submitter: Emilyly Bailey

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Interim Committee On Transportation  
Funding

Measure, Appointment or  
Topic: LC 2

Testimony Against Transportation Tax and Fee Increases & Section 12

Chair, Members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to speak today in opposition to the proposed transportation funding package. While we all support safe and reliable infrastructure, this plan places an undue and unfair burden on working families, small businesses, and rural communities.

First, the proposed 6¢ per gallon gas tax increase hits everyone at the pump—commuters, parents, delivery drivers, and farmers. With inflation already straining household budgets, this regressive tax will hurt those who can least afford it.

Second, the doubling of vehicle registration fees and title fees—from \$139 to \$216—is excessive. These are mandatory costs just to own a vehicle. Families struggling to afford a used car shouldn't be penalized with higher fees to fund projects they may never benefit from.

Third, the plan doubles the payroll tax to fund urban transit systems—many of which are underutilized and mismanaged. This shifts the burden onto employers and workers statewide, even if they live far from the cities receiving the benefits.

Fourth, the proposed Road Usage Charge for EVs and hybrids punishes people for making environmentally responsible choices. It undermines the transition to cleaner vehicles and sends a mixed message about the state's priorities.

Fifth, allowing the Governor to appoint the ODOT Director directly erodes accountability. ODOT must remain an independent agency serving the public—not a political arm of the executive branch.

But perhaps most concerning is Section 12 of this proposal.

Section 12 would give unelected ODOT bureaucrats the power to raise gas taxes and truck fees in the future WITHOUT a public vote or legislative approval.

This is a dangerous precedent. It removes the voices of citizens and their elected representatives from decisions that directly affect their wallets and livelihoods.

Taxation without representation should never be acceptable in Oregon.

Accountability and transparency must be the foundation of any public funding decision. Section 12 is undemocratic, and it must be removed from the bill immediately.

In closing, we all want better roads and safer bridges—but this proposal is too heavy-handed, too expensive, and too undemocratic. I urge you to vote NO and go back to the drawing board with a plan that is fair, transparent, and respects the voices of Oregonians.

Thank you.

Overburdened taxpayer