

In June of 2025, Oregonians **overwhelmingly** made their voices heard against HB 2025. Gov. Kotek has decided that she does not have to submit to the will of the people and is trying to ramrod her tax hikes down Oregonians' throats with this latest maneuver. The GOP had proposed an alternative plan that would have resolved the issue without raising taxes, but it did not get a hearing. 40% of Oregonians vote Republican. Our voices are not being heard and our wishes are not being considered.

As I understand, only 6% of ODOT's past budget went towards road maintenance. During that time, 12 maintenance stations were closed down, but they spent millions setting up explicit DEI-related positions, including the Assistant Director for Social Equity, an Inclusion & Diversity Analyst, and an Equity and Community Engagement Manager, with the Office of Social Equity overseeing broader DEI efforts.

ODOT funds should be used for road maintenance and infrastructure. Just last winter, ODOT decided that the E. Oregon portion of I-84 was no longer priority 1 for snow blowing during the winter. Imagine that, a major commercial trucking corridor was not a priority because it is in rural Oregon. It doesn't matter if rural citizens can safely travel the roads, especially since they closed the maternity center & ICU in Baker City and residents must travel a minimum of 50 miles to La Grande for care. They did not consider the increase of traffic accidents involving 18-wheelers that would result in this decision. In the end, they blackmailed the legislature into guaranteeing funds, and their proposal did not go into effect; however, the fact that they tried shows how rural Oregonians are disregarded in the decisions made and policies proposed.

Democrats and Republicans opposed HB 2025 in June. We do not need to address it again. Do not allow Gov Kotek push this Special Session bill forward against the will of all Oregonians.

As many of the latest proposals are the same (or very similar) to those proposed in HB 2025, I include my previous testimony.

June 10, 2025 testimony:

I wholeheartedly oppose HB 2025. We do not need more taxes in Oregon. We are drowning in government regulations, new fees, new taxes, & higher taxes. I encourage you to show restraint & realize that Oregonians are overwhelmed & cannot support the ever-increasing annual taxes & fees imposed by those that do not understand the issues faced by the "average" citizen. Before imposing new fees/taxes, audit the departments & find where the \$ has gone. We deserve accountability for all the money we have already paid before you impose even more onerous taxes & fees.

I have addressed some of the major new taxes & fee increases proposed below:

- ***Gas Tax Increase: A proposed 37.5% increase to the state gas tax, equating to approximately 40 cents more per gallon.*** We already pay some of the highest price(s) per gallon in the US. High gas prices disproportionately effect (negatively) rural residents & school districts. We drive 100s of miles daily just to get to work & our kids to school.

- **Vehicle Registration Fee Increase: A 50% increase in vehicle registration fees, adding an estimated \$50 or more to the cost of registering a vehicle.** When I moved to Oregon, we paid \$13/year to register our vehicles. Once politicians had the power, the cost of registration has skyrocketed. It is just too much.
- **Vehicle Title Fee Increase: An increase in vehicle title fees, estimated at \$70 or more, to be applied at the time of vehicle purchase or transfer.** Again, this is just too much. The average Oregonian cannot continue to pay these increases. What happened to all the \$ collected since Politicians got control of the fees?
- **Sales Tax on Vehicle Purchases: A new 2% sales tax on vehicle purchases, applied at the time of buying a car.** Oregonians have never voted for a sales tax. This needs to go directly to the voters & not be imposed (illegally) by a super-majority of Politicians.
- **Corporate Delivery Fee: A new fee for businesses using at least 10 medium-duty vehicles for package deliveries to homes or businesses, based on the mileage driven.** Another tax on Businesses. Didn't you learn from the CAT tax that closed pharmacies, & is driving Businesses out of Oregon? Again, rural Oregonians are disproportionately affected – we only have 1 pharmacy left for 10,000 residents – waiting times 2+ hours.
- **Tire Pollution Tax: A new tax on tire purchases:** Again, this hits rural Oregonians hardest. We have to replace our tires more often. Also, many of us have 2 sets of tires because of ice & snow – it's a safety issue here, not an option.
- **Transit Tax Increase: An increase in the transit tax to support expanded public transit initiatives:** This is not a priority for Oregonians, as polls show. It is another tax that rural Oregonians pay without getting any benefit(s).