



City of Elgin

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Dear Co-Chair Wagner, Co-Chair Fahey, Committee Members,

The Elgin City Council reviewed the Governor's transportation package, and we are opposed to the bulk of provisions in the proposal. The increase in the gas tax, and increases in title and registration fees are going to make transportation more unaffordable in our primarily low-income community. Implementation of road user fees via software and devices is an invasive method of tracking private motor vehicle operators, and a different method of allowing electronic vehicles to contribute to road maintenance needs to be devised. While the City stands to gain additional revenue from the passage of the legislation, we worry that these additional funds will be voided by increased fuel costs charged by vendors.

The City's perspective on payroll taxes for transit is more complex. Elgin has no reliable transit throughout the week. Northeast Oregon Transit operates the "Connecting All Towns" Route which only enters Elgin two days per week, but its schedule precludes transporting anyone to La Grande and back for a regular 9-5 workday even on those two days. The current payroll tax provides negligible benefits to Elgin residents, and we believe that the proposed increase will provide no new or expanded services to residents. However, we would support changes to the payroll tax proposal that mandate all revenue from Elgin be spent on transit in Elgin.

The City of Elgin appreciates your hard work considering the transportation needs of the Jewel of the Blue Mountains. We are happy to provide any additional information and support you require as the Legislative Assembly considers the transportation package at the upcoming special session.

Best regards,

Alex McHaddad, City Administrator