

Submitter: Heather Harter  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Interim Committee On Transportation  
Funding  
Measure, Appointment or LC 2  
Topic:

On behalf of the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce representing 600 businesses who employ thousands of people in rural Klamath County, we write to express our strong opposition to the proposed transportation package being considered in the upcoming Special Session.

We recognize that transportation infrastructure is vital to Oregon's economic health, public safety, and quality of life. However, the package as currently outlined disproportionately harms rural communities and small businesses while directing significant resources toward urban public transit systems that will not benefit our members or residents.

In rural Oregon, families and businesses must travel far greater distances for work, medical care, education, and basic services compared to those in urban centers. Increased gas taxes, higher DMV fees, and the implementation of a Road Usage Charge will add substantial new costs on top of already elevated fuel and living expenses. These measures will burden households and undermine the competitiveness of small businesses that form the backbone of our local economy.

Additionally, the proposal to double the payroll tax will further reduce take-home pay for workers at a time when inflation and rising costs are already straining family budgets. While urban areas such as Portland and Salem may see expanded transit options, rural Oregonians will shoulder higher costs with little to no return on investment.

We urge you to consider an approach that is more equitable and reflective of the realities facing all Oregonians. Transportation funding must not come at the expense of rural vitality, small business sustainability, and household stability.

For these reasons, the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce respectfully opposes the current transportation package and asks you to reject it during the Special Session. We stand ready to work with you on solutions that truly serve the whole state, not just select regions.

Sincerely,  
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