

August 25, 2025

Co-Chair Senate President Robert Wagner
Co-Chair Speaker Julie Fahey
Co-Vice Chair Daniel Bonham
Co-Vice Chair Christine Drazan
Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding

Co-Chairs President Wagner and Speaker Fahey,

As leaders of organizations representing Oregon's workers, local governments, transit systems, and the trucking industry, we write together to urge your support for Legislative Concept 2 during the upcoming special legislative session.

Oregon's transportation system is the backbone of our economy and communities. From the roads and bridges that connect our cities and towns, to the transit services that provide transportation alternatives for access to jobs, schools, and healthcare, to the freight networks that keep goods moving—our state's prosperity depends on safe, reliable, and modern infrastructure.

Right now, Oregon's transportation system is under threat. ODOT has announced that without new funding, it must lay off approximately 20% of its workforce. Local governments that have already been downsizing road crews and reducing services face further cuts without new revenue. Transit districts are reducing services and cutting staff. These agencies face challenges from inflation, declining fuel consumption, dramatic reductions in federal funding, and limited local revenue-raising options. If there is no fix, the secondary effects that the remaining transportation workers left in place will increase risk and harm for workers and the commuters they support - in all weather and all emergencies.

In a system designed for all road users to pay their fair share, the system has become imbalanced for Oregon's funding balance. The trucking industry has overpaid its fair share, while lighter vehicles and more significantly, electric vehicles have not done their part. There is an urgent need to rebalance our system and begin the difficult work of modernizing our state's transportation funding mechanisms to match the realities of the 21st century and the way that goods, people, and services move across our state.

And finally, we must urgently restore public trust in ODOT to deliver on major road projects and keep Oregonians safe by maintaining our roads and bridges efficiently and effectively.

Legislative Concept 2 is the right legislation step at the right time to begin to address these imbalances, to stabilize transportation funding in the short-term, and to set us on a longer-term path to modernizing this system. The bill will:

- Increase oversight of ODOT through audits, consistent reporting on major projects, and reforming the Continuous Improvement Advisory Council.
- Provide enough short-term funding to stabilize ODOT, local governments, and transit agencies across the state.
- Simplify our weight-mile tax system and institute a diesel tax that will allow Oregon to fully participate in the national database, allowing us to reduce evasion and bring more balance between light and heavy vehicles.

- Set Oregon on a path to modernize our revenue streams by increasing participation in our Road User Charge program, and moving us away from reliance on the gas tax.

Legislative Concept 2 is not perfect - but it is a critical step the Legislature must take to stabilize our system while we recommit to a long term, comprehensive transportation package that stabilizes the State Highway Fund into the future - so that all Oregonians have access to their daily needs, including critical services, emergency management, school, and work.

This group is broad and bipartisan by design. Our organizations often approach issues from different perspectives, but we are united in the belief that Oregon needs urgent action to meet today's transportation needs and prepare for the future. We all benefit from both personal and commercial vehicles having access to critical services and regular supplies that help keep all of Oregon's safer communities thriving.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to Oregon's transportation future. We look forward to working with you.

