



(541) 332-3681

555 20<sup>th</sup> Street

PO Box 310

Port Orford, OR 97465

August 25, 2025

Dear Co-Chair Wagner, Co-Chair Fahey and members of the Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding:

On behalf of the Port Orford City Council, I am writing to express our deep concern over the State of Oregon's intent to close the ODOT maintenance facility located in our city, given lack of funding from the legislature. We hope you will find a way to rectify this situation in your special session by supporting the LC2 proposal.

We understand that ODOT is facing difficult budgetary decisions, but the reduction in staffing and resources allocated to Port Orford will have serious implications. Two of the four positions historically stationed here have already been eliminated, and the remaining staff will now be reporting to the Hunter Creek station near Gold Beach.

This is deeply problematic for our community, given that we frequently get cut off from or face the threat of imminent cut off from travel either North or South of the city. Local emergency responders have raised concerns about how this change will impact response times during road emergencies. Our police department and emergency responders depend on quick uninterrupted access to hospitals, social services, and various emergency mutual aid services from both North and South of our area.

Highway 101 is not just a transportation route—it is a critical lifeline for Port Orford. It supports local commerce, ensures access to healthcare, and serves as the primary corridor for emergency services. The highway's vulnerability to landslides, flooding, and washouts—particularly during winter storms—makes the presence of ODOT personnel and equipment in Port Orford essential.

The closure likely means that there will be no or limited equipment stored locally, and any emergency response will now depend on travel from Gold Beach, over 30 miles away. In the event of a landslide or road closure south of us, there could be no way for ODOT crews to even reach Port Orford in a timely manner—or crews may need to come from Coos Bay. This creates an unacceptable risk to public safety.

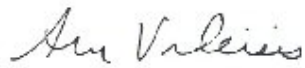
Our population is particularly vulnerable—with over 60% of our residents over the age of 60. Timely road clearance during storms is vital for ensuring access to hospitals and emergency services. Delayed response times could have life-threatening consequences.

In the event of a larger emergency event —other facilities identified with safety roles — such as the Port of Port Orford and Cape Blanco Airport —could become inaccessible to use without the equipment, skills, and know-how that our local ODOT crew brings to bear. The decision to eliminate our local crew and equipment puts our residents at risk and undermines the reliability of a highway that is essential to the health, safety, and economic well-being of our community.

For all these reasons, we strongly urge the Interim Committee to support the LC2 proposal, which we hope will enable ODOT to maintain the continued operation of its Port Orford facility. We also appreciate that the LC2 proposal will help cities continue to access funding for maintenance of local roads.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ann Vileisis".

Mayor Ann Vileisis,