

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

Good afternoon,

I am writing today to express my strong opposition to Governor Kotek's transportation bill.

As a citizen in ultra-rural Oregon, this funding bill disproportionately affects rural residents like myself and my neighbors. Rural folks by definition are required to use more fuel than Oregonians living in bigger metro/urban areas because we must travel significantly farther distances for work commutes, banking, groceries, doctor's appointments, etc. than our urban counterparts. The fuel tax increase places an undue burden on rural community members who are already struggling to make ends meet in Trump's new "benefits for the ultra-rich only" economy. I strongly urge a no vote on this basis alone.

I also oppose increasing title/registration fees, particularly to the degree they are proposed. A nearly 100% increase in title/registration fees without a corresponding increase in the level of service provided is irresponsible. The DMV offices in Coos County are already inefficiently managed, quite unhelpful in many instances, and do not provide much in the way of customer service. Rewarding this type of mismanagement is not what Oregonians support. I strongly urge a no vote on this basis.

A strongly oppose an increase to the payroll tax, particularly for the purposes proposed by the Governor. A payroll tax increase to fund urban/metro public transit has no tangible benefit to rural Oregonians. Many of us, particularly in Coos County, have already seen steep declines in our public transit options locally. Most notably, the CCAT bus system in Powers has (or is expected to) completely shut down, leaving many elderly and disabled folks unable to utilize the transit system for basic living essentials (groceries, doctor appointments, mental health appointments, prescriptions, etc.). I strongly urge a no vote on this basis and encourage lawmakers to focus efforts in rural areas that have been underserved for decades.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to the announcement that the funding bill has been squashed in favor of exploring restructuring at ODOT/DMV offices, as well as considering the direct financial impact to those most strongly affected--rural Oregonians.