

Submitter: Marsha Morin

On behalf of:

Committee: Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding

Measure, Appointment or Topic: LC 2

I am writing regarding the transportation bill you will be hearing this Friday. I am in opposition to this bill and have provided a table detailing my reasons for the opposition. I retired in 2024 from 33 years and 3 months of state service. I started my career as a receptionist, moved into IT, then ended my career as a Compliance and Regulatory Manager. I am proud of what I accomplished throughout my entire career and worked very hard in each position to ensure I was being a great steward of the Oregon's resources. Sadly, I was at the front line of seeing and questioning government waste and the choices of leadership. This is what I learned.

- When there are budget cuts you cut what will hurt the most. (Exactly what ODOT is doing)
- We need to spend all the money before the end of the biennium, or we won't get it next year. (maybe you didn't need it)
- We can move the money in a budget around where ever we want. If we run out of money here, we'll pull from this other bucket. (So don't worry about trying to balance your own budget in our agency)

What I saw was:

- Items being purchased then sitting until they were outdated, never used, or had to wait until another end of biennium free for all to buy the rest of the parts to make them useful.
- Being told we have \$11 million one day then a week later that was wrong, and we need to cut positions, back to we have plenty of money.
- High high-level managers being direct appointed into positions with very little if any leadership experience.

All of this is a small bit of explanation to why I believe I have some knowledge and feel very strongly that ODOT should be reformed prior to allowing any additional money there way. I am sure they can find ways to balance the astronomical budget they already have. I read the explanation from the governor's office saying some of the funding was legislatively assigned and couldn't be changed by ODOT. But Legislature could change that. I also understand that we are losing federal dollars because of our Sanctuary Status. That can also be legislatively changed. So, change it. We are paying a lot of income tax and other

taxes to the government only to be told we must pay more. We cannot afford this continued assault on the taxpayers. I pay for specialized plates for forestry and the Police/Firefighter memorial fund. If the cost of registration doubles, I will have to stop paying into those funds that I chose to do. These tax hikes will hurt more than they will help in ways the governor has not considered.

<p>Page 2, Line 18</p> <p>184.620. (1) The Department of Transportation shall be under the supervision of a Director of Transportation who shall be appointed by and shall hold office at the pleasure of the Governor. <i>[The Oregon Transportation Commission shall appoint the director, after consultation with the Governor. The director serves at the pleasure of the commission.]</i></p>	<p>Disagree. This change happened with DPSST. After the change, the then Speaker of the House's Husband was appointed Director of The Department of Public Safety Standards and Training. This director's service as the director ended with an ugly DOJ investigation and an agency left in shambles. The Commissions and Boards that oversee state agencies should have control of agency appointments. Though there may need to be reform in those commissions and Boards.</p>
<p>LC2 Page 9 Line 28 thru page 10 Line 18.</p> <p>This basically states that if the Legislative Assembly does not respond to a report provided by ODOT, then every two years ODOT can set the gas tax increases without legislative approval.</p>	<p>Disagree. Changes in taxes need to either go to the people or legislature. They cannot remain at the agency level. ODOT has already proved they do not manage their money well and this opens the door for them to be able to adjust the taxes every two years if the Leg Assembly does not act. This could either turn into a legislative payback where one side or the other of the legislature stalls a vote so it doesn't get addresses then ODOT gets to raise taxes on their own.</p>
<p>Page 12, Line 25. Gas Tax</p>	<p>Disagree. This shows a gas tax increase of \$.12 instead of \$.06. It appears a new tax on gas was added in 2024. It is too soon to determine if the 2024 increase helped with the budget. A gas tax should not be increased without valuable research on what the first \$.06 increase represents. True statistical data should take 5 years to gather.</p>
<p>Page 13, Line 1-6. Registration Fee Increases</p>	<p>Disagree. Registration Fees. There should be no reason for a jump this big in registration fees. It lends itself to the poor</p>

	money management of ODOT. Fee increases are necessary and expected but doubling a fee is not feasible for most Oregonians. The people should not pay for the mistakes of the Leadership at ODOT.
Page 23, Line 2. Title Fee Increase	Disagree. Same reasoning as above. This more than doubles the fee for purchasing a vehicle as well as the “privilege tax” that was added in 2018 and being passed on to Oregonians. If I purchase a vehicle for \$30,000. The state would receive \$536. Based on 2024 data there were 162,100 new vehicles titled in Oregon. That comes out to \$86,885,600 in one year under this bill. That is taking \$36,148,300 from tax payers each year. (Not calculations done based on Google AI search results of number of vehicles titled, “privilege tax”, Registration and title fees, and based on a \$30K vehicle)
Page 27, Line 30 Transit Payroll Tax	This would amount to a \$7.3 million tax to Oregonians IF everyone made \$35K a year. Again, we cannot allow the government to double taxes and fees when they make poor judgment calls.
Page 36, Line 1 Pay per Mile	Pay Per Mile. I do agree with a switch to how money is collected to maintain our roads and with my very limited understanding a pay by mile option seems very fair, it would mean only people using the roads are paying for the roads. This part was a very confusing read but my thought is it should be structured to be used by all vehicles, not just electric and the gas tax should be removed as well as engine powered vehicle registration fees. There should be fees for non-engine towed vehicles like trailers and possibly farm equipment that moves between fields on roads, but not everyone.
Page 45, line 5 Rose Quarter Project	The Rose Quarter Project needs to be removed and funded by the city of Portland. The Rose quarter is not a

	resource everyone in the state will utilize. Seems like it's a privileged item to me.
Beyond Page 45 Commercial Carrier Fees	This area got into language I am unfamiliar with and did not want to comment on. I will say that any raise in fees or taxes for our commercial drivers should also not occur due to the reasons listed above. I also noted Diesel is being defined as motor vehicle fuel for the gas tax. If that is the case that is a huge increase in revenue that I think should be watched due again due to mismanagement.