



COMMISSIONER PHIL CHANG

To: Joint Interim Committee On Transportation Funding
From: Commissioner Phil Chang

August 25, 2025

Chairs Wagner and Fahey, Vice Chairs Bonham and Drazan, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of LC 2. I'm Deschutes County Commissioner Phil Chang. In my free time I'm also a member of the Oregon Transportation Commission so I have a detailed understanding of how money flows and where money flows inside ODOT.

Our state needs adequate transportation operations and maintenance funding

- so we can keep roads clear and functioning as we seek to respond to wildfire;
- to remove snow and ice this winter to prevent unnecessary accidents and; injuries
- and to patch our roads now so we don't need to spend much more to reconstruct them later.

This funding package will allow ODOT to retain hundreds of employees whose primary responsibility is operations and maintenance, and to invest in the equipment and supplies needed to maintain our current, existing state roads.

As a County Commissioner, I'm grateful that this package honors the 50-30-20 split of State Highway Fund dollars, providing half of the funds raised to local government roads.

When the Legislature passed HB 2017 eight years ago, it committed ODOT to construct a whole lot of large new capital projects. But HB 2017 did not provide adequate focus on, or sustainable funding for, basic operations and maintenance. Now is the right time to fix that unbalance and reduce our dependence on gas tax revenue and to shift towards a road user charge system - at least for electric and high efficiency vehicles.

A state-by-state review of the bundle of taxes and fees currently charged for transportation across the West puts Oregon 2nd lowest among 7 states. Please provide adequate resources to meet our operations and maintenance needs

Thank you.

Phil Chang
Deschutes County Commissioner