

Submitter: Joseph Rider  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Interim Committee On Transportation  
Funding  
Measure, Appointment or LC 2  
Topic:  
Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal for yet another increase in taxes to fund the Oregon Department of Transportation. As a resident, a parent, and a taxpayer, I am deeply disappointed by the pattern of continually looking to families and households for additional revenue whenever budgetary shortfalls appear.

In my own home, as in so many others across Oregon, when extra costs arise, we do not simply go out and find “new revenue.” We make adjustments. We cut expenses in one area to make room for another. We prioritize our needs. If groceries cost more, then a family trip may be postponed. If a utility bill rises, then we reduce discretionary spending elsewhere. That is the reality of responsible budgeting. I believe it is past time for government—at every level, including ODOT—to embrace that same reality.

The cycle of ever-increasing taxes is unsustainable. Each new increase, though often presented as modest, is added to the last. For families already struggling with inflation, housing costs, and everyday expenses, these added burdens are not minor; they are significant and cumulative. Government exists to serve the people, not to perpetually expand its budget by extracting more from them.

ODOT, like every household and business in Oregon, must learn to operate within its means. The demand for accountability, efficiency, and cost-cutting within the agency is long overdue. Before turning once again to hardworking families, ODOT should first demonstrate that it has made every effort to reduce waste, streamline operations, and prioritize the most essential services.

What is needed is not a quick infusion of taxpayer dollars, but a fundamental change in mindset: one that asks not “How do we raise more revenue?” but rather “How do we make better use of what we already have?” Oregon’s families are required to make that calculation every single day. It is only fair that our state government do the same.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge this committee to reject additional taxation as the default solution. Instead, call on ODOT to tighten its belt, find efficiencies, and prove to the people of Oregon that it can live within the resources it already has.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully

Joe Rider