

TO: Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding; Governor Tina Kotek
FROM: Davis Hayter, J.D., Oregon Resident & Business Owner
SUBJECT: Written Testimony in Opposition of Proposed Transportation Tax Increases
DATE: June 27, 2025

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Davis Hayter—a lifelong Oregonian, recent graduate of Lewis & Clark Law School, and a member of a family that has proudly owned and operated small businesses in Oregon since 1978. I am writing in follow up to my June 27, 2025 written testimony opposing House Bill 2025 (“HB 2025”) to strongly object the \$5.7B in transportation tax hikes proposed by Governor Tina Kotek and under consideration by this interim committee.

It’s hard for me to view Governor Kotek’s proposal of anything other than utterly tone-deaf and completely disregarding of Oregonians—given it comes on the heels of HB 2025 being defeated after an overwhelming majority of Oregonians testified in opposition of it. The sentiment among those who testified on HB 2025 was clear: Oregon is at a crossroads—and imposing additional tax burdens on transportation threatens already-struggling families, businesses, and greater communities throughout this state. Thus, I now ask the following unrheterical question: *How can Governor Kotek possibly reconcile this proposal as remotely aligning with the demonstrated wishes of her constituents?* To me, her calling of this special session here to consider her proposal makes something clear: she does not care about—nor considers—the opinions and interests of Oregonians. For the Governor to be this blatantly disregarding of Oregonians is, quite frankly, shameful.

Furthermore, this tax increase likely will not solve ODOT’s budgetary issues. I am incredibly frustrated by the lack of any demonstrated attempts or efforts to find alternative solutions to overcome ODOT budgetary issues—especially in light of recent findings by the Governor’s own Secretary of State (SoS) office. A June 2025 audit conducted by the Oregon SoS revealed that state agencies—notably ODOT—egregiously mismanage their spending oversight, management, and tracking. In other words, it’s well established that ODOT does not have a revenue problem—but a spending problem. Nevertheless, Governor Kotek proposes raising taxes on Oregonians to give this agency more money to wastefully spend without even acknowledging or taking accountability for these persisting issues.

In sum, my hope is that this Committee differs from this established position of the Governor—and instead aligns with the majority of Oregonians by denying her proposal. Thank you for your time and consideration of my perspective in this testimony.

Sincerely,

Davis Hayter