

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

Because Governor Kotek prioritizes being a Sanctuary State over the well being of citizen tax payers in Oregon, we are losing Federal Funds that are so critical to our infrastructure. To make up for these lost funds, the Oregon Tax payers are now being asked to fork over more of their limited funds for services that have no true transparent accounting. We can't know if the money is spent responsibly or how much is wasted by hiring Contract Workers to do "administrative" tasks that should be done by state workers themselves. We also don't know how many millions of dollars are wasted renting/remodeling empty buildings the state doesn't even own. This information isn't listed anywhere for the Tax Payer to see, it's just a line item on a budget under the generic heading of "administrative contractor fees" or "rents". But if the truth were known, people would be shocked at the level of waste that happens while ODOT Managers look on.

ODOT Managers are very keen to replace laid off staff with Artificial Intelligence and Automation so they can preserve their own jobs at the expense of others. Why doesn't the State take action to reduce costs by replacing the DMV, HR staff, Payroll/Tax, Clerical Staff, Public Inquiry and most Managers with AI instead? Most, if not all, of their jobs could easily be automated saving the Tax Payer time and money. Instead, Managers threaten to cut jobs for critical staff that actually help make roads safe or those who support information system infrastructures at the ground level.

The Union was no help in making sure that critical jobs were preserved, but instead followed lock step with ODOT managers "choice" to cut people who were lowest seniority. Most of the jobs cut were maintenance or ground level workers doing the heavy lifting for the safety of Oregon. The jobs that should have been cut instead were managers and administrative staff who did not contribute to the overall efficient running of critical infrastructures or those who mismanaged funds. But the Union made sure they were preserved.

All of the gloom and doom told to Oregon Citizens of unsafe roads seems like a way to scare the Tax Payer into agreeing that the tax hikes and fees are necessary, but they clearly are not. If we stopped being a Sanctuary State, used AI to replace jobs that are not critical like those listed above, stopped paying rents or remodeling buildings that are mostly empty:

https://www.oregon.gov/das/Financial/Documents/2025-27_PriceList_GB-

Final.pdf#page=27, the ODOT budget would be in a huge surplus and maybe the Oregon Tax Payer could get some relief from all the fees and taxes for once.