

Testimony of Anneliese Koehler, Legislative Affairs Manager

In support of LC 2

Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding

August 25, 2025



Metro is the elected regional government that serves nearly 1.7 million people in the 24 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area. We provide a broad range of public services that includes land use and transportation planning, solid waste and recycling operations, housing and homeless services, management of parks and natural areas, and operation of major visitor facilities like the Oregon Convention Center and the Oregon Zoo.

Metro appreciates the Governor's office and Legislature's leadership in providing a stopgap solution for Oregon's transportation system. Transportation is a critical issue facing our state and our region. A functioning and affordable transportation system efficiently moves people and products to their destinations and ensures that all people can connect to the education, work and life opportunities they need to thrive. Its success is critical to the livability of all Oregonians.

Understanding the urgency and needs of Oregon's transportation system, Metro was disappointed that the Legislature failed to pass a transportation package in the 2025 session. We are heartened to see the state government leaders come together quickly and advance an initial step towards a holistic transportation package. LC 2 is a crucial short-term solution for a long-term problem. In 2026 and 2027, it will be critical for state leaders to continue to move forward solutions to address the multitude of transportation needs facing our state.

Metro supports LC 2's commitments to operation and maintenance. These investments will facilitate filling potholes, rebuilding bridges, putting in sidewalks, and making it safer for cars and people on our roads. LC 2 will create a more functioning and safe transportation system in the short term where people can get to work on time and know that their roads will be plowed during inclement weather. It also preserves 50/30/20, ensuring that both state and local road needs are addressed. LC 2 also puts us on the path towards a more sustainable transportation funding system -- road usage charges are necessary steps to prepare us up for the future. Metro also supports the increase in transit funding in LC 2. The 0.1% increase in the payroll tax is a meaningful step in the right direction and helps to preserve options for those unable to drive.

LC 2 is a critical first step in solving Oregon's transportation system needs. Additional solutions are needed for state and local government partners for operations and maintenance and transit. In addition, crucial safety programs like Great Streets, Safe Routes to School and Oregon Community Pathways need investments. These programs put in safe crossings, shared-use paths, sidewalks and bikeways and transform dangerous roads to safe ones. We also need to finish HB 2017 anchor projects like I-5 Rose Quarter and I-205

Abernathy Project. These projects will improve safety and congestion along these corridors and deliver economic benefits to nearby communities.

We appreciate the Governor and the Legislature in advancing this short-term solution and urge its passage. This is the first step on the road to long-term solutions. Our transportation system at the state and local levels is in dire need of funding to fix potholes, pave streets and put in sidewalks. We look forward to working together over the next few years to advance Oregon's transportation system.