

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

Testimony of Jason Fields

Yamhill County Resident & County Budget Committee Member  
Candidate for Yamhill County Commissioner  
RE: Opposition to Proposed Gas Tax and ODOT Funding Package  
Date: August 26, 2025

Co-Chairs Wagner & Fahey, Co-Vice-Chairs Bonham & Drazan, and Members of the  
Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the proposed transportation  
funding package currently under consideration.

My name is Jason Fields. I'm a small business owner, a member of the Yamhill  
County Budget Committee, and a lifelong Oregonian. I write today in strong  
opposition to the proposed tax and fee increases intended to address the Oregon  
Department of Transportation's (ODOT) projected budget shortfall.

This proposal includes:

A \$0.06 per gallon increase to the gas tax (a 15% hike)

A \$42 increase in vehicle registration fees

An additional \$30 surcharge on high-efficiency and electric vehicles

A \$139 increase to the vehicle title fee (180% jump)

A doubling of the payroll tax

And most concerning, new authority for ODOT to raise select taxes and fees without  
legislative approval

I strongly oppose this package—not only because of its financial burden on working  
Oregonians, but because ODOT has not demonstrated the fiscal responsibility  
required to justify these increases.

This is not the first time I have spoken out on this issue. In 2022 and 2024, I ran for State Representative after ODOT proposed tolling on I-5 and I-205. These tolls would have imposed thousands of dollars in additional costs on working families, particularly those in rural areas who rely on those corridors for employment, school, and essential services. At that time, I had no political background. I simply knew it was wrong. While I did not win those races, my campaign helped force the tolling issue into the spotlight—and ultimately, my opponent, who had previously voted for tolls, reversed her position under public pressure.

This new funding proposal is a continuation of the same problem: asking Oregonians to pay more for infrastructure they've already funded, while ODOT continues to allocate hundreds of millions toward special projects—most of them concentrated in urban areas—and debt service rather than maintaining our existing roads, bridges, and rural infrastructure.

Working families are already being squeezed by inflation, housing costs, and utility increases. Doubling down on that burden with higher fuel and payroll taxes—while giving ODOT expanded authority to raise fees without accountability—is not a responsible or sustainable path forward.

I urge this committee to:

Reject this tax and fee package in its current form

Require a full, independent audit of ODOT's budget and spending priorities

Allocate other state resources to paying down ODOT's debt service on an accelerated timeline

Protect county allocations so they can continue to invest in local infrastructure and maintenance

And refocus state transportation policy on maintenance, rural access, and transparency

Thank you for your time and for considering the voices of working Oregonians who are deeply impacted by these decisions.

Sincerely,  
Jason Fields  
Yamhill County Budget Committee Member  
Candidate for Yamhill County Commissioner