

**County Commissioners**  
Danielle Bethell, Chair  
Colm Willis  
Kevin Cameron



**Chief Administrative  
Officer**  
Jan Fritz

## MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

---

August 25, 2025

Co-Chair Senator Rob Wagner  
Co-Chair Representative Julie Fahey  
Co-Vice Chair Senator Daniel Bonham  
Co-Vice Chair Representative Christine Drazan  
Members of the Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding

### **Re: Opposition to Legislative Concept 2 (LC 2) – Special Session Transportation Proposal**

Dear Co-Chair Wagner, Co-Chair Fahey, Co-Vice Chair Bonham, Co-Vice Chair Drazan, and Members of the Committee,

The Marion County Board of Commissioners recognizes the importance of a safe, reliable transportation system for Oregon's residents, businesses, and communities. We also understand that the Legislature faces difficult decisions in responding to the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) budget challenges. However, we must express our opposition to LC 2 as currently drafted and share several concerns on behalf of the people we represent.

First, we are deeply concerned that LC 2 gives unelected bodies the ability to adjust tax and fee rates through automatic mechanisms tied to the Highway Cost Allocation Study. Taxation decisions should remain in the hands of elected officials accountable to the voters, not delegated to administrative agencies. This shift in authority removes transparency and undermines public trust.

Second, continual increases in fuel taxes, registration fees, title fees, payroll taxes, and new road usage charges are placing growing burdens on Oregonians. Families and businesses across the state are already struggling with higher costs of living, and additional transportation taxes will only exacerbate these pressures. The Legislature must carefully weigh whether imposing more taxes is truly sustainable for Oregon's working families.

Third, we remain opposed to any future tolling of state, county, or city roads without local approval. If ODOT seeks to implement tolls within a jurisdiction, those tolls must first be approved by the impacted city council or county commission. Local governments are best positioned to evaluate the economic, social, and transportation impacts of tolling on their residents and businesses.

Fourth, while we understand the stated need for this bill, we are troubled by the over \$1 billion budget error within ODOT and the agency's history of cost overruns on major projects. Asking taxpayers to contribute more money without first demonstrating accountability for existing funds

is unacceptable. ODOT must show real reforms in its budgeting, project management, and fiscal oversight before any long-term revenue solution is considered.

Finally, the process by which this proposal has been developed raises concerns about transparency and collaboration. Transportation funding is a statewide issue that impacts every Oregonian, yet LC 2 has been advanced under a compressed timeline with limited opportunity for public engagement. A bipartisan, transparent, and inclusive process is needed to develop a comprehensive, long-term solution that addresses both funding stability and accountability.

During the Legislature's 2024 Roadshow, Marion County actively participated and identified priorities for transportation funding reform. A key priority for us was the incorporation of Electric Vehicles (EVs) into the funding system, with higher fees to ensure equity in paying for the wear and tear on our infrastructure. While LC 2 does include EV surcharges and a phased-in road usage charge, these changes must be considered in the broader context of accountability, transparency, and fair implementation.

The Board acknowledges that Oregon's transportation system needs sustainable funding, but LC 2 is not the right approach. We urge the Legislature to pause, re-engage stakeholders, and design a package that balances fiscal responsibility with accountability to the taxpayers who ultimately bear the cost.

Sincerely,



Danielle Bethell  
Chair

Kevin Cameron  
Commissioner