



August 25, 2025

Co-Chairs Senator Wagner and Representative Fahey
Joint Committee on Transportation Funding
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Wagner and Fahey and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Bend Chamber and our 1,750 members and 8,500 local and regional businesses, we thank you for the opportunity to provide comments relating to LC 2. These comments reflect the position of our organization and our regional partner Economic Development of Central Oregon (EDCO), a private, non-profit organization serving the tri-county region of Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson Counties whose mission is to promote sustained job growth and prosperous communities through traded-sector industry growth.

Our position is based on the core principle of modernizing Oregon's transportation system and planning for sustainability. A functioning transportation system is vital to healthy economy. In Central Oregon we have a unique perspective as transportation is our lifeline to efficiently and effectively move to and from our region. Quite simply, we need safe and well-maintained roads for our community and our businesses to thrive.

LC 2 contains many elements of the "back to basics" approach that we share with industry and community partners.

- We support the **accountability provisions** of the bill that address current concerns with ODOT's fiscal management and urge a continued focus on accountability and fiscal restraint.
- We support the **weight mile compromise** that helps undo years of overpayment and miscalculations.
- We support the **commitment to 50/30/20 split**, understanding the vital importance of these funds to our local communities.

Yet several aspects of LC 2 are concerning and lead us to oppose the bill in its current form.

- **Payroll Tax Increase:** We oppose the proposed doubling of the payroll tax to fund transit. This approach is inconsistent with the bill's stated focus on critical solutions for operations and maintenance. It would impose significant costs on Oregonians statewide without delivering immediate benefits, while further worsening an already unfavorable tax climate for businesses—Oregon ranks among the bottom five nationally for corporate taxes depending on the index referenced. We agree that transit is a vital component of long-term modernization, but this provision requires a broader and more thoughtful discussion.
- **ODOT Revenue Structure:** We are disappointed that the proposal does not account for ODOT's existing expenses, alternative funds, or other revenue streams in addressing the current budget gap for operations and maintenance. Funding core functions of ODOT should not rely solely on new tax burdens. Instead, a comprehensive and creative evaluation of available resources should be prioritized to ensure sustainable solutions.



On behalf of our organizations, we appreciate sharing these comments and we look forward contributing to a proposal that provides a more accountable and sustainable approach to transportation funding.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sara Odendahl", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sara Odendahl
Interim CEO
Bend Chamber

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jon Stark", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jon Stark
CEO
Economic Development for Central Oregon