

**August 27, 2025**

Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding  
900 Court Street NE, HR F  
Salem, OR, 97301



RE: LC 2 - Public Comment

Dear Co-Chairs Fahey and Wagner, Vice Chairs Drazen and Bonham, and members of the committee,

My name is Mackenzie Springer, and I am the Transportation Advocacy Manager with Neighbors for Clean Air, an Oregon nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that every Oregonian has clean and healthy air to breathe.

This budget stopgap is necessary to prevent devastating cuts to public transit and keep our transportation agencies afloat. But the reality is this: Oregon's transportation system is not just a source of congestion and frustration for Oregonians; it is also our state's largest source of air pollution and one of the most serious threats to public health.

Transportation accounts for more than half of Oregon's air pollutants. Tailpipe emissions from cars and trucks release particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and other harmful pollutants directly linked to asthma, cardiovascular disease, and other chronic illnesses. These impacts are not abstract; they are measured in emergency room visits, missed school days, and rising healthcare costs that fall hardest on families and local communities.

And the burden is not evenly shared. Pollution is concentrated in dense neighborhoods, near schools, and along major highway corridors, placing children, seniors, and underserved communities at the greatest risk.

Investments in clean, accessible transportation are proven solutions. Expanding public transit reduces vehicle traffic and cuts emissions at the neighborhood level. Safe options for walking and bicycling not only improve safety but also provide immediate health benefits by lowering local air pollution exposure. These investments make daily life healthier and more affordable for thousands of Oregonians.

Yet this current stopgap budget does little to reduce this pollution harming Oregonians right now. When the Legislature at a later date returns to consider a full transportation package, we urge you to center air quality and public health by:

- **Funding clean, electrified transportation**, particularly in the form of charging infrastructure to support the transition to zero-emission trucks and away from the diesel engines threatening our communities' health.

- **Expanding public transit and active transportation** so Oregonians can get to work, school, and healthcare inexpensively and without depending on cars that pollute our neighborhoods.
- **Protecting the most exposed communities** by funding programs like Safe Routes to School, Great Streets, and Oregon Community Paths that improve safety and reduce pollution exposure for children and families.

Oregonians are calling for safer streets, healthier air, and affordable, reliable transportation options. This stopgap budget keeps the system afloat, but it does not address the pollution crisis that is cutting lives short and driving health inequities across the state.

While we acknowledge the importance of this intermediate action to keep our transportation system running, we can, and must, come back in future years with a transportation package that delivers cleaner air, protects public health, and builds a safer, more sustainable Oregon for everyone.

Thank you for your time and consideration, as well as for your leadership in shaping Oregon's transportation future.

Sincerely,  
Mackenzie Springer  
Transportation Advocacy Manager  
Neighbors for Clean Air