

Co-Chairs Wagner and Fahey, Co-Vice Chairs Bonham and Drazan, Members of the Joint Interim Committee On Transportation Funding,

When I signed up to be on the testifying panel, I was under the impression that I would be given more time to give my full testimony. Instead, I was cut off after two minutes, and what I was able to verbally get out in that amount of time, did not send the right message. The following is my full testimony:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in regards to LC 2. First, I want to say thank you for adding back the traditional 50/30/20 State Highway Fund distribution and the Small County Allotment. Those two pieces are critical for Wallowa County.

Wallowa County is the proud steward of over 700 miles of roads and 60 bridges. Only 28% of our 90 paved road miles are in good condition. We also maintain 610 miles of gravel and dirt roads that connect our businesses, ranches, families, visitors and connect us to our 67% of lands that fall under the management of our Federal Government.

If passed, Wallowa County stands to receive about \$441,000 in annual funding from LC 2, which will be instrumental in keeping all members of our road department working, and our hundreds of miles of road as safe and functional as we can.

Without the Small County Allotment, our county would only receive about \$337,000 dollars annually from this transportation funding package proposal. The Small County Allotment redistributes a small percentage of the counties' 30% of the State Highway Fund to keep our county roads safe for our residents, local businesses, and many visitors. This allotment is important for counties like Wallowa County who have specific challenges due to the decline of timber receipts and the pullback of our federal SRS dollars which Congress has decided to halt this year.

I want it to be known that this support for LC2 does not come without some hefty heartburn. I see LC2 only as a band-aide. Whether LC2 passes or not, we need to immediately enter into conversations to build a useful and robust transportation plan for 2027 that focuses on the core function of road maintenance and safety. For that matter, let's start the 2027 Legislative Session with a good Transportation plan, instead of trying to shove it in at the last minute. In this plan we need to address a much higher level of agency-wide accountability where we can ensure that our hard-earned tax dollars are going to be spent appropriately. We need more boots on the ground and less people in big offices. However, today, I'm showing up in support of LC2 due to the safety of Wallowa County citizens. We could all say heck no and hold out to see if the threat not to plow over the winter is real, but I'm not willing to gamble with Wallowa County lives. If even one life is lost in Wallowa County or elsewhere in Oregon due to lack of plowing

because local or statewide layoffs had to occur while we sort all of this out, IT'S TOO MANY! Wallowa County does not have the time, funding, equipment or personnel to backfill where ODOT falls short. We need to stop the political posturing, and gross overspending, and get to work carving out a Transportation Plan that puts our citizens well-being first! If current agency leadership is unwilling or unable to come to the table to make real attempts at creating a Transportation Plan that focuses on both fiscal accountability and a recommitment to the core mission of the agency while also earning back the trust of Oregon citizens, then I suggest a change be made immediately! We've got 15 months to get it right! Furthermore, if any of these things can be fixed or addressed now, let's do it!

I urge you to work with AOC, EOCA and rural counties to develop a comprehensive statewide transportation package to start off the 2027 legislative session that modernizes transportation funding and provides the resources necessary to maintain a safe and efficient transportation system that focuses on core functions.

I do not like that we have been put in this position between a rock and a hard spot while winter is approaching and the safety of our citizens is threatened.

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