



August 27, 2025

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RE: Testimony on LC 2 for Transportation Special Session (Neutral)

To Chair Wagner, Chair Fahey, and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) works to create change so that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) can live full lives as valued members of their communities. Oregonians deserve a transportation system that is both dependable and affordable, but also fully accessible. The Governor's proposal for funding transportation will have a positive impact on people with disabilities by ensuring that they continue to have access to vital public transit and paratransit services.

Access to public transit is important for people with disabilities for several reasons. For example, they are both less likely to own or have access to vehicles than people without disabilities, and more likely to use public transit for the trips that they do take.¹ With those factors in mind, the increase to the payroll tax used to support public transit is of critical importance to people with disabilities.

Unfortunately, other revenue generating mechanisms included in LC 2 are likely to have negative impacts on people with disabilities. Both the gas tax and the DMV fees will disproportionately impact those with disabilities. Gas taxes are regressive because it is a paid by every driver regardless of their income.

¹ U.S. Dept. of Transportation. "Travel Patterns of American Adults with Disabilities," pp 3-4 (September 2018). Available at <https://www.bts.gov/sites/bts.dot.gov/files/2022-01/travel-patterns-american-adults-disabilities-updated-01-03-22.pdf>



Similarly, DMV fees are flat or fixed fees under the proposal that do not account for income. Owning and using a vehicle is necessary for most people with disabilities, especially those that live in outlying areas or in rural counties that are poorly served by public transit.

There are alternatives that would help mitigate the impacts of the gas tax and DMV fees on people with disabilities. For example, a program to waive DMV fee increases for people receiving SSI/SSDI would be relatively easy to administer yet ameliorate some of the negative impacts of regressive taxes and fees. In the longer term, working on ways to fund Oregon's State Highway Trust Fund in a more equitable manner would reduce negative impacts on low-income individuals on fixed incomes.

Investments such as the payroll tax increase that supports the State Transportation Improvement Fund is also not the only way to improve dependable and accessible public transit for people with disabilities. Modifying the funding formula for distribution of STIF monies, particularly for rural counties, would help offset the lack of paratransit and other forms of accessible transportation. In Oregon, as in much of the United States, people with disabilities are disproportionately represented in rural counties. Rural counties like Wheeler, Lake, and Harney report higher disability percentages than urban counties like Multnomah and Washington. For those reasons, weighting funding formulas that distribute funds to local jurisdictions based on disability-specific demographic data would have positive impact on accessible transportation options for those populations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on LC 2 relating to transportation.