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Speaker Fahey, President Wagner, members of the Joint Interim Committee On Transportation Funding,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and - along with Governor Kotek - for your efforts in convening the special session.

My name is Indi Namkoong and I am the Transportation Justice Coordinator for Verde. We are an environmental justice organization based in the Cully neighborhood of NE Portland. **Along with more than 50 safety, climate, and EJ organizations partners from across the state in the Move Oregon Forward campaign, we have been hard at work engaging you AND communities like ours around this transportation package for nearly two years.** We attended every single stop of the listening tour, we joined every work group through the winter, we activated hundreds of Oregonians to weigh in along the way, and during the session we worked alongside legislators and allies to bring forward options for fair revenue streams and accountability policies in pursuit of a transportation package that worked for all Oregonians.

**Verde, along with many of Move Oregon Forward's members, will remain neutral on this proposal.**

This budget fix will provide temporary life support to vital Oregon transportation services - including transit agencies, cities, and counties - and the thousands of workers they collectively employ. Without action, far too many of us in rural and urban communities will find ourselves stranded without basic services.

**However, we must confront the fact that LC 2 leaves many of our community's most pressing needs unaddressed.** In the listening tour, in public hearings, over the last two years and more, Oregonians in every corner of the state have demanded a fairly funded package that improves accountability and supports core services and expands safe, clean, affordable transportation choices. **This public mandate has not changed.** The low-income families and community members Verde serves are already facing rising costs of groceries, housing, and healthcare. Now more than ever, affordable transportation options like transit, walking, and biking are a lifeline for us, ensuring we aren't forced to take on another massive new cost in the form of car ownership, which on average exceeds the payroll tax for most Oregonians many times over. Cuts to these lifelines are still coming if this legislature does not act soon.

**This proposal also creates new climate challenges that will require prompt attention if not corrected before this special session adjourns.** We're concerned that the proposed RUC structure overcorrects for EV underpayment and actually charges electric and hybrid vehicles more than comparable ICE vehicles, indexing their rate to a fuel efficiency that's worse than what most modern cars actually deliver. This stands to slow the adoption of EVs that our state climate plans rely on and risks increasing our transportation carbon emissions. Our community is already on the front lines of extreme heat and air pollution - and many of us have felt them ourselves this week- so it's alarming that we may deepen this



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crisis when a simple fix is possible now. For rural and exurban drivers, who are already paying more in gas taxes due to the increased distances they must drive and would benefit from a fairly structured RUC, it's also concerning that this would eliminate EVs as a cost-saving option in these already challenging times.

**We are not asking for your rejection of this proposal;** Oregon communities frankly can't afford yet another rug being pulled from under us. We ARE asking you to commit to closing these gaps without further delay. We are counting on you to join us in making the most of every day of the 2026 short session and the 2027 long session to correct this setback on emissions, to deliver the safe streets, public transit, and clean transportation choices Oregonians have been asking for over the last two years. We also urge that you pursue stronger accountability policies and real governance reforms for ODOT at the earliest opportunity; until the public's trust in our transportation decision is repaired, it will continue to loom large over any transportation funding conversation. Thank you for your consideration and continued partnership.

Warm regards,

Indi Namkoong  
Transportation Justice Coordinator  
Verde