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On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Interim Committee On Transportation
Funding
Measure, Appointment or Topic: LC 2

I am a lifelong Oregonian, and have spent the last twenty years in the greater Portland area. I am lucky to have retired parents who want to be involved in my children's lives, but I moved away from my hometown at 18 and never went back. Oregon is a big, beautiful state, and we're lucky to have nearly every biome right in our own backyards. But we need roads to access these places. I need the freeways to stay safe so that my parents can come visit me and my children. I need them to stay safe so that when I visit my sister, I get back to my children safely. I need them to stay safe so that I can show my children all the beauty and wonder our state has to offer. But Oregon is changing, and we have work to do in order to keep up.

Keeping up takes planning, and that planning takes money. Funding ODOT is incredibly important to me, because I care about the safety of everyone who lives and visits here. And while using local streets is all well and good, most of us HAVE to use highways and freeways to get to where we're going, whether we're biking, driving, carpooling, or bussing. Today I traveled from Clackamas to Beaverton -- less than twenty miles -- and I drove on five separate ODOT facilities to do it.

I trust ODOT to take the safety of all Oregonians seriously. I do NOT trust private contractors to do that. Our safety isn't something I'm willing to outsource to a company just looking to make a profit. Funding ODOT benefits all Oregonians because we all deserve to travel safe roads. It's the same reason we fund public schools. It is a service that benefits us all.

I support funding ODOT because I want safe roads to drive on. I want to know there are workers available in emergencies. I want my wait times in construction zones to be short. I want DMV to be fully staffed so I can get the help I need.

Failing to fund ODOT leaves all Oregonians in the lurch. We will all suffer when ODOT employees are overworked and trying to take on the workload of 20% of their missing coworkers. We will all suffer when there is no one available to remove hazardous debris from the freeway. We will all suffer when our rural two-lane highways get washed out and never get repaired, cutting us off from our friends, our neighbors, our environment. And ultimately, more Oregonians will die. Keeping our roads in good condition doesn't just make the experience of driving more pleasant, it LITERALLY saves lives.

To keep our roads safe, we need ODOT to be fully staffed. I urge the Oregon State

Legislature to vote in favor of this spending package so that all Oregonians can get to where they're going and home again -- safely.