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On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Special Session Committee On Transportation
Funding
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3991

Oregon HB 3991 should be opposed because it would make the per-mile road usage charge mandatory over time, disproportionately impacting working families and individuals on fixed incomes. The measure phases in a new road usage charge for electric and hybrid vehicles starting in 2027, which could deter the transition to cleaner vehicles and penalize residents who have already invested in environmentally friendly transportation. Additionally, the requirement to pay either a yearly fee or the per-mile charge adds further confusion and financial burden, especially as transportation and housing costs continue to rise in Oregon.

Impact on Working Families

The per-mile charge creates extra financial strain for families who rely on personal vehicles, particularly in rural areas with fewer public transportation options. For retirees and those on fixed incomes, any mandatory fee is especially untenable, given Oregon's already high cost of living and lack of affordable alternatives.

Environmental Disincentives

Phasing in a mileage tax for electric and hybrid vehicles sends the wrong signal to Oregon residents who are choosing cleaner cars. Making it more expensive to drive eco-friendly vehicles undermines state goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and ignores the broader environmental benefits these cars provide.

Administrative and Compliance Burdens

As the law would force drivers to choose between a per-mile tax or an annual fee, it increases complexity and confusion both for residents and for public officials charged with administering the scheme. These administrative burdens do not reflect the needs or priorities of ordinary Oregonians, and cause further compliance issues for all parties concerned.

Conclusion

HB 3991 increases costs for everyday Oregonians, discourages cleaner transportation choices, and complicates compliance without offering meaningful solutions to funding or environmental challenges. For these reasons, Oregon should reject HB 3991.