

Submitter: Caden Smith

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Special Session Committee On Transportation
Funding

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3992

I'm a 22-year-old first-generation college student in my senior year at OSU, studying CS, who has lived in this State my entire life, and I hope to have a state left, as I believe brain drain will greatly affect our state if we can't find a way to keep businesses. I completed an internship at DTNA this summer, and to see the state of our local economy up close was harrowing. Our insane tax rate damages businesses of all sizes, and there's absolutely no reason to open a business in Oregon with Vancouver across the bridge. People vote with their feet, and we will continue to see an exodus of >100k+ income earners if we keep charting course. The entry-level STEM market has been affected here disproportionately, and the majority of my peers, myself included, currently plan to start our careers in Seattle or the Bay Area. We need to ease on taxes, not hike them, I also believe it's very fair to criticize the mismanagement of funds, and routinely tunnel visioning and becoming dependant on whatever liberal industry is pushed (Solar, Electric Vehicles, Chips Act), when it's never a gurantee who'll win president, and it leaves us out to dry, when our major companies orient accordingly. We need strong PRAGMATIC leadership right now, and I hope nobody is surprised when the 2026 elections swing to the right. We need to comply with the president, even if we don't agree (check my voting record); it's absurd to think that an economy of Oregon's size can play hardball with someone we should all know will never submit. If we try to have an ego off with the administration, it's obvious who wins, and we are so vulnerable right now that we can't afford that. It gives me pain to see my great state die in front of my eyes, still having memories of pre-pandemic Portland, before we adopted self-sabotaging empathy. Tina Kotek will move right back to PA when she's done here, and has shown no pride in our great state. I hope that our representatives can think about our long-term success, and not cave into the hivemind supermajority, as you'll be the ones who look your voters in the eyes, not the person raised in PA who saw an opportunity to play identity politics.