



To: The Joint Committee on Transportation Funding

From: Chief Brian Stewart
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Chief Ben Stange
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Karl Koenig
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Date: August 31, 2025

Re: HB 3991 & HB 3992 – Ensuring a Safe, Reliable Transportation System Through Adequate ODOT Funding

Co-Chairs Wagner and Fahey, Vice-Chairs Bonham and Drazen, and members of the committee,

The Oregon Fire Chiefs Association, the Fire and EMS Chapter of SDAO, and the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council collectively represent the leadership and front-line personnel of Oregon's fire and emergency services. We are offering our testimony today in support of HB 3991 and HB 3992, which provides reliable funding to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the critical services it provides.

A well-funded Department of Transportation is vital in the delivery of fire and EMS services - ensuring that first responders can reach Oregonians in their moments of greatest need.

When roads are impassable, fire and EMS response to medical emergencies, fires, vehicle collisions and natural disasters is delayed or blocked. Whether due to snow and ice, landslides, downed trees, or other hazards, this can mean the difference between life and death or between containing a fire while it's small and facing catastrophic loss.

During winter months, ODOT's plowing, sanding, and de-icing operations keep mountain passes open and safe. These passes are lifelines - connecting communities to hospitals, emergency care, and critical resources. Without these services, emergency vehicles may also be stranded or unable to reach people in need.

Additionally, ODOT's fast response vehicles ensure that emergency responders can reach incident scenes quickly and safely – allowing prompt emergency care and reducing further risk to crash victims, responders, and the traveling public from secondary crashes or other hazards.

In short, ODOT crews and their work are part of Oregon's emergency response system. Ensuring that ODOT has stable and adequate funding to maintain its staffing, equipment, and round-the-clock operations is critical to protecting Oregonians and our responders. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3991, HB 3992, and a safe, reliable transportation system.

Thank you for your consideration.

Chief Brian Stewart, Oregon Fire Chiefs Association
Chief Ben Stange, Fire and EMS Chapter of SDAO
Karl Koenig, Oregon State Fire Fighters Council