

Submitter: Rebecca Headrick

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

I have learned that HB2025 is a huge tax increase on Oregonians. Since most Oregonians, including myself, believe that the Department of Transportation does not use the funds they already have wisely, I oppose this bill. Why? I can think of several reasons off the top of my head. Where to begin?

One example of ODOT actions causing both waste and actually putting Oregonians in danger is McKay Road, the arterial road between I-5 and St. Paul in Marion county. When that road was expanded through farmland and paved to connect French Prairie Road and St. Paul Hwy in the 1980's, there were three times drivers had to stop between I-5 and Hwy 219: French Prairie, Case, and Butteville Road were all 3-or 4-way stops. (traffic from Champoeg had right of way) Over the span of 10 years, the stop signs for the east-west traffic on McKay were removed, creating a high-speed expressway that was only one lane each way with no refuge or turn lanes in the middle, and, to No One's surprise, deaths and accidents increased. According to the Newberg Graphic, in 2018 or 19, law enforcement (i think it was the sheriff's office) wrote over 120 speeding tickets for speeds between 70 and 90mph during one 4-hour patrol on that road. When I wrote to the Department of Transportation suggesting returning the original stop signs to break up and slow down cars and save lives, the response was "no." Now there is a multi-million-dollar roundabout planned for that stretch of road. If iODOT would purchase 6 shiny new stop signs, for far less cost, and put them back where they took them out in the first place, the savings from scrapping that one roundabout project would be huge. Saving lives would just be a side benefit. Multiply that savings by all the mismanaged roadways in our state, and there is absolutely no need to increase transportation taxes.

I live in Newberg. My experience with personal interactions with ODOT engineers and representatives at different live open houses in my town left me very concerned. At one, circa 1996, there was a plan to increase lanes of through traffic on Hwy 99W. The plans on display did not accurately represent the actual road that was being changed. When I pointed it out and asked the engineer if she had ever driven that stretch or road, she never had. The changes she proposed were done, anyway, but when the plans did not agree with the actual road, the cost was millions more than budgeted. Was the engineer accountable for not doing her research? Even just the research of actually looking at the road she was assigned? No.

The most recent in-person interaction I can recall was with the engineer for the Newberg-Dundee Bypass phase 1. When looking at the plans, the shoulders of the bypass were only 7-feet wide. When I pointed out to the engineer that if one tractor-trailer rig had a flat tire, it would shut down the whole by-pass, his response was "Well, then I hope that doesn't happen." Sure enough, with some stretches of the shoulders too narrow to allow for emergency vehicles, collisions on that stretch are

often severe and typically shut down the whole highway.

Thank you for considering the experience and opinion of one of your citizens. Instead of raising taxes again, please make them stop wasting the funds they have.