

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE
900 Court Street NE, Room H-178
Salem, Oregon 97301
(503) 986-1828



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WAYS AND MEANS

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To: Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee
From: Ben Ruef, Legislative Fiscal Office
Date: February 26, 2026
Subject: SB 1544 – Relating to transportation; prescribing an effective date.
Work Session Recommendations

SB 1544 makes broad policy changes related to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The bill directs ODOT to establish a “department of transportation university,” create a public performance database similar to Washington State’s Gray Notebook, assess training needs related to best practices, and centralize project delivery efforts. It also requires ODOT to report to the Legislature on progress implementing a recent performance audit, transportation design practices, and the new university and database.

The bill also repeals the statutory Joint Committee on Transportation and amends multiple statutes to update reporting requirements to transportation-related legislative committees. In addition, it modifies provisions related to highway cost allocation studies and rail reporting. The bill includes changes to motor vehicle dismantler certificate requirements and expands the definition of “qualified entity” for purposes of public transportation funding.

The -A7 amendment removes the provisions in the engrossed version that directed ODOT to establish a transportation university, create a public performance database, assess training needs, and centralize project delivery efforts. It also removes the new reporting requirements related to audit implementation and design practices, the repeal of the Joint Committee on Transportation, and the amendments to highway cost allocation, rail reporting, and other transportation statutes. As amended, SB 1544 is limited to changes to motor vehicle dismantler certificate renewals and a modification to the definition of “qualified entity” for public transportation funding to include certain intergovernmental entities providing transit services on behalf of counties or federally recognized Tribes.

The fiscal impact of the measure is anticipated to be minimal.

Amendment

LFO recommends adoption of the –A7 amendment.

MOTION: I move adoption of the –A7 amendment to SB 1544. *(vote)*

Final Subcommittee Action

LFO recommends that SB 1544, as amended by the –A7 amendment, be moved to the Ways and Means Full Committee.

MOTION: I move SB 1544, as amended, to the Full Committee with a do pass recommendation. *(vote)*

Carriers

Full Committee: _____

House Floor: _____

Senate Floor: _____