

February 5 2026

Re: SB1542 Transportation – Measure What We Drive

Dear Sen. Gorsek, Sen. Weber, Sen. Frederick, Sen. Pham, Sen. Starr and Committee On Transportation:

My name is Kathaleen B Parker, from Senate District 10 in South Salem, and I support SB1542 because we need a sophisticated high-speed rail from Portland to Eugene, geared for both business and student communities and to strengthen the Willamette Valley economy, and support our climate goals.

SB1542 proposes a performance-based, 10-year capital investment plan for transportation. It directs the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) to develop a scoring system to prioritize projects in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

What it does: Provides legislative direction to ODOT to prioritize spending state transportation funds in ways that move us closer to the goals outlined in the Oregon Transportation Plan, such as having a well-maintained system and eliminating fatalities and serious injuries from traffic crashes. It does this by adopting best practices from other states that score projects and programs based on their measurable impacts, and adjust spending based on progress across all goals. It puts guardrails on megaprojects, and ensures more public reporting and accountability for where our transportation dollars are being spent and why.

MEASURE WHAT WE DRIVE:

- ❖ 10-Year Planning: Directs the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) to create a 10-year capital investment plan for infrastructure.
- ❖ Prioritization System: Requires the development of a scoring and ranking method for projects to be included in the STIP.
- ❖ Increased Accountability: Mandates that the Department of Transportation (ODOT) produce a condition report on state highways.
- ❖ Transparency: Requires the OTC to add more information about project selection to its website.
- ❖ Purpose: The initiative aims to align transportation projects with specific, long-term state goals.

Why it matters: ODOT has never received legislative direction and flexibility to spend transportation dollars in a way that aligns with Oregon's goals. Instead, it's been statutorily restricted in how it can spend money, which is why Oregon keeps spending money on new projects that were written into law while our existing infrastructure crumbles. This bill aligns with some of the work ODOT is already doing to plan better, using a 10-year capital investment plan (CIP) model, and crucially gives ODOT direction to spend in line with the priorities outlined in the CIP, which they would otherwise have to disregard under current law.

Thank you for your time and support,

Kathaleen B Parker, Willamette Valley, Oregon