

February 5, 2026

Subject: HB 4081 Letter of Support

Chair McLain, Co-Vice Chairs Boshart Davis and Gamba, Members of the House
Committee on Transportation,

The Associated General Contractors Oregon-Columbia Chapter comprises nearly 740 members across Oregon and Southwest Washington in the commercial construction industry. Many of our members, both large and small, work on highway and bridge projects all over the state.

We appreciate Representative McLain bringing this concept back to this committee after thoughtful conversations with Oregon Justice Department following the 2025 legislative session. The main substance and mission of the bill remain unchanged, and it allows ODOT to add one additional safety tool that can save lives in highway work zones.

Traffic crashes and fatalities in work zones have been trending upward both in Oregon and nationally at an alarming rate. Each project goes through a vetted process to determine which of the various safety tools available to project engineers, contractors, and industry partners are most viable to keep workers safe, traffic moving, and work flowing at an efficient pace. Depending on the size and type of each project, different traffic controls and safety measures are selected.

Automated photo radar is an additional safety tool which can be used where it makes sense, and has been proven in other states as an effective measure to shift driver behavior and slow traffic down. As mentioned in the public hearing, if a speed reduction is approved during a road construction project, it is only ever reduced by 10 miles per hour. The unfortunate reality is that even with the speed reductions and lane shifting, drivers still often drive at speeds exceeding the normal posted speed, endangering not only our construction crew members, but other drivers who are actually following the modified speed limit. This has led to the exacerbated rates of fatalities and serious injuries in work zones for drivers and their passengers, not just construction workers.

Photo radar in highway work zones is not a new concept in Oregon. In ODOT's [2024 Report on Photo Radar in Highway Work Zones](#), they cite that the criteria required to utilize photo radar in a work zone make the program hard to administer. Due to a variety of unintended barriers created by the way the statute was written, photo radar has not been used in an Oregon highway work zone since 2018. The goal of this bill is to change that and allow this safety tool to be used in our work zones where it makes the most sense.

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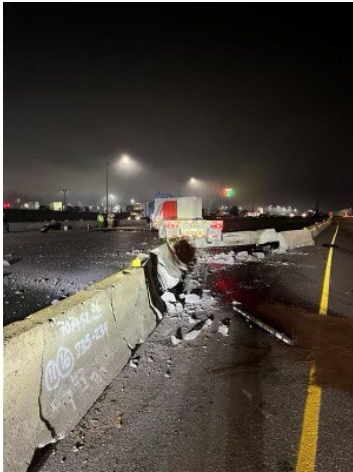
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In some cases, physical concrete barrier may be able to be placed for a longer-term project, which is an important tool that can sometimes be used to separate construction workers from live traffic. Other shorter-duration projects, or even paving projects where one lane is closed overnight, are not scenarios in which the installation and removal of a physical barrier are possible in one shift. No single safety tool in the work zone is a silver bullet (see below).



Photos taken after speeding truck crashed into concrete barrier at Aurora-Donald project on I-5

Construction work zones are inherently dangerous places. However, the more tools we can provide to protect our workers, we can lessen the risk through different strategic measures. In over a dozen states across the United States, automated photo radar in construction work zones has immediately shown results in shifting driver behavior and reducing traffic accidents.

The goal of this bill is to get everyone to stop speeding in construction work zones. There are measures in place in the bill to ensure that drivers are notified that photo radar is in being enforced when a camera is deployed, workers must be actively present in the work zone, and there is a 6 mile per hour grace range above the posted speed before tickets are issued.

Following the 2025 legislative session, we worked with the Judicial Department to carefully craft language to ensure that the procurement process will result in a quality vendor, which will reduce the number of errors and unnecessary staff time in the courts. Additionally, we added a provision that ODOT shall notify OJD of the number of photo radar units that are intended to be deployed over the following 12 months, the counties within which the photo radar units are likely to be deployed, and the number of citations expected to be issued based on traffic volume and expected driver behavior.

We believe that when the legislature originally authorized the use of photo radar in zones, the intent was for the program to be a useful tool for increasing construction worker and driver safety. HB 4081 allows this initial goal to be realized. It is our hope that the data presented, the stories you've heard in committee and likely in your communities will lead you to approve this measure. We'd also like to direct your attention to the coalition one pager on OLIS to see the breadth of the support that this bill has – this is an issue that all who engage in highway construction care deeply about.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration, and we urge you to please vote “Yes” on HB 4081.

Sincerely,

Tanner Lloyd
Strategic Affairs Manager