

Testimony in Support of Moving the Election Date for the Transportation Measure



Chairs Jama and Gomberg, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Felisa Hagins, and I am the Executive Director of the SEIU Oregon State Council. We represent 85,000 working people across Oregon, including ODOT and DMV workers, local government workers, public employees, and workers whose jobs and communities depend on stable and predictable infrastructure funding.

I am here today in support of the proposed change to move the election date for the transportation ballot measure.

Our support is grounded in one core principle: **certainty matters.**

Right now, significant portions of the ODOT budget are effectively frozen because of the pending referendum. That uncertainty has real consequences for workers, for projects, and for communities across the state. The longer the question remains unresolved, the longer ODOT is forced to delay decisions, pause investments, and operate in limbo. ODOT has over 700 vacancies because of that uncertainty meaning many safety, infrastructure, accountability and contracting don't get done.

For that reason, we believe the sooner voters can weigh in, the better. A timely vote allows the state to move forward, plan responsibly, and restore stability to transportation funding.

This timing is especially critical because local governments are building their budgets right now. Cities, counties, transit districts, and special districts need clarity to finalize plans, and make staffing decisions to determine what they can responsibly commit to. Uncertainty at the state level ripples outward and undermines local budgeting efforts happening in real time due to the 50/30/20 split.

Importantly, moving this election does not end the conversation — it creates space for a better one. Resolving this measure sooner allows legislators and advocates to engage in a more comprehensive, thoughtful discussion about our long-term transportation system, funding needs, and priorities between now and 2027, without the immediate pressure of a frozen budget hanging over every decision.

For workers and communities alike, stability, predictability, and the ability to plan matter. Advancing the election date helps restore those fundamentals. For these reasons, we urge your support for this change. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

503-236-4949
MAIN OFFICE

503-238-8653
FAX

525 NE OREGON ST.
PORTLAND, OR 97232

@SEIU49
FACEBOOK
INSTAGRAM
BLUESKY
TWITTER