



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 100-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 12, 2020

To: [Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources](#)
Senator Kathleen Taylor, Co-Chair
Representative Jeff Reardon, Co-Chair

Re: [SB 5702](#) - Vehicle Inspection Fee Increases - **SUPPORT**

Since 1968, LWVOR has been a voice on behalf of air quality. In more specific terms, the League supports adequate standards for control of all sources of pollution and strict enforcement of established rules and regulations, a comprehensive, coordinated program for management of air as a natural resource, and adequate financing for air pollution abatement programs.

Vehicles are the most egregious source of air pollution in Oregon. Every combustion engine contributes to climate change by emitting pollutants such as smog, carbon monoxide, air toxics and greenhouse gases. Cars account for about 40% of those emissions. These toxic emissions are also known or suspected to cause serious health effects, including cancer. Vehicle exhaust contains benzene, acetaldehyde, butadiene and formaldehyde. National studies estimate that levels of these toxic air pollutants in the Portland region exceed health-based benchmarks that are guidelines for safe levels.

Our state Vehicle Inspection Program (VIP) helps ensure that vehicles are properly maintained so the emission control system keeps pollution levels within EPA’s allowable standards over the life of the vehicle. It is an important means of keeping our state’s air pollution in check. Pollution from a poorly maintained car is about 3 to 4 times that of a properly functioning car. Owners of 25% of vehicles tested have some kind of repair completed within the last three months before trying to pass the inspection test. So it is clear that this program is effective.

The last fee increase for this program was in 1997. The VIP has eliminated several positions and made efforts to cut costs, but the expenses for running the program have been exceeding revenues since 2013. Reducing the number of positions or stations further would increase wait times, impair customer service, and cause additional idling time.

The current \$21 fee would be equivalent to \$33 if inflation were to be considered. The DEQ is proposing to increase the fee to a modest \$25 in the Portland inspection area. It is important that fees listed for this bill be enacted to enable the VIP to be funded at a level the public expects to protect public health and our air quality. Investing in the VIP is money well spent.

LWVOR encourages you to adequately fund the VIP and pass SB 5702. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

Susan Mates
LWVOR Air Quality Portfolio

Cc: Richard Whitman, DEQ Director