



Testimony in Support of House Bill 3065 with the -5 Amendment  
Joint Committee on Transportation

Speaker of the House Tina Kotek  
March 16, 2021

Colleagues, thank you for the opportunity to introduce the -5 amendment to House Bill 3065.

In 2017, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2017, a modern-day transportation package that included dedicated funding for major infrastructure projects on the interstate system in the Portland metro region. Legislators recognized the difficulties that congestion in the region caused for Oregonians all across the state and made a promise to improve mobility for everyone who uses this system, including much-needed seismic upgrades. House Bill 2017 dedicated direct funds to certain projects that would improve safety and quality of life in the region.

The proposal now before the committee in the -5 amendment to House Bill 3065 is a bold new starting point with a practical and balanced goal: to fully realize and recommit to all the projects envisioned in House Bill 2017, including those left unfunded. We made a promise to Oregonians in 2017 and we need to deliver on that promise. We simply cannot afford to create new freeways. We must make our existing system work for the entire state. We can start the necessary projects sooner, we can find a way to complete them, and in doing so we may increase our competitiveness for future federal dollars.

The -5 amendment enables a pathway to invest in a broader plan that will allow the state to leverage long-term funding to complete necessary improvements to the transportation system. It does this by:

- Adding flexibility to construction timelines by broadening the use of the penny in previously authorized gas tax revenue dedicated to the region (Sections 1 and 2);
- Maximizing low-risk short-term borrowing capacity (Section 3); and
- Enabling a system-wide tolling program to help pay for improvements, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve mobility for all Oregonians traveling through the region (Sections 4a and 16).

The amendment also:

- Modernizes our outdated tolling statutes (Sections 4b – 32, also included in HB 3055, 2021);
- Establishes an equitable approach to tolling fees and rates (Section 33); and
- Provides an opportunity to fast-track living wage job creation in the region (Section 36).

House Bill 3065 with the -5 amendment is a critical starting point to an infrastructure conversation that I believe this legislature must prioritize this session. I am committed to working with all stakeholders collaboratively to follow through on the goals we set four years ago after a year's worth of bipartisan, bicameral work.

I hope we can work together to make progress on our shared goals so we can improve livability and safety in this critical transportation system. Thank you for your time and consideration.