



Service Employees International Union Local 503

72,000 public services workers, care providers, and non-profit employees in Oregon.

To: Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

On: March 17, 2021

Re: Senate Bill 5542 - Department of Transportation

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and Gomberg, members of the Committee,

My name is Courtney Graham, and I am submitting testimony today on behalf of SEIU Local 503. SEIU represents more than 72,000 workers in the state of Oregon, including many of the hardworking folks at the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). SEIU 503 generally supports the Governor's Budget for ODOT, though we do have some concerns about staffing at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

The Governor's Budget for the Agency largely (but not completely) preserves staffing and funding at levels that were included in the budget for the 2019-2021 biennium. The investments made by the Legislature in 2019 included: additional permanent staffing for House Bill 2017 (2017) implementation, a reorganization of the Agency's structure, and additional limited duration staff for the implementation of House Bill 2015 and REAL ID. The Governor's Budget did not include the extension of the aforementioned limited duration positions, though we understand the Agency is asking for 84 limited duration positions to continue for between six months and a year into the next biennium. SEIU 503 strongly supports this request.

For most of the past year, the DMV has remained open across our state, with frontline staff reporting to work and doing their best to assist the public in conducting their business in the midst of a global pandemic. Despite this, there is still a significant backlog in titles, driver's tests, licensing, and more. Additionally, because the timelines for HB 2015 and REAL ID coincided with the pandemic, the workload that would have already increased as a result was made worse. In order to ensure adequate staffing to meet the need, ensure that the folks who have been on the frontlines this whole time can get some relief, and to clear the backlog, DMV needs these limited duration positions to be extended, and made need more resources in the future. We urge you to support their request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Courtney Graham
Political Strategist
SEIU Local 503, OPEU