



February 8, 2021

The Honorable Lee Beyer
The Honorable Susan McLain
The Honorable Brian Boquist
The Honorable Ron Noble

RE: HB 3055

Co-Chairs Beyer and McLain, Co-Vice Chairs Boquist and Noble, and Members of the Committee:

Traffic is not only a source of annoyance and inconvenience: there are huge economic and societal costs associated with our clogged roads. These costs include the negative economic impacts of lost time, the negative health impacts of air pollution, and the negative climate impacts of greenhouse gas emissions. Even worse, these burdens are not distributed equitably throughout society. Low-income and communities of color suffer to a disproportionate degree because they typically can't afford to live close to where they work, and are therefore forced to travel greater distances. For these reasons and more, the members of Business for a Better Portland have been watching closely as conversations about congestion pricing have developed at the city, regional and state levels.

Studies show that even small reductions in the number of vehicles on the road can significantly reduce congestion. We cannot rely on the temporary congestion relief provided by economic recessions, pandemics and road expansions. As our economy recovers, we need a robust long-term congestion pricing strategy to make our transportation system more efficient, predictable and equitable. Congestion pricing can take many forms, but the *primary* goal of any program should be to manage demand on existing infrastructure in order to reduce congestion and its associated negative impacts. This goal cannot be secondary to revenue generation

because pricing to generate revenue requires a completely different approach to pricing to manage infrastructure efficiently.

We share the concerns expressed by the City of Portland and others that this legislation would limit our ability to provide the greatest congestion relief and travel time savings for freight and commuters alike. By eliminating significant portions of the HB 2017 language referring to congestion management and congestion relief and replacing it with language referencing tolling, it de-prioritizes congestion management. We cannot afford to lose this tool. We further believe that it is essential to allow revenue generated by any congestion pricing program to be spent in the corridor, not just on the tolled facility. Without providing multimodal improvements and meaningful travel alternatives to give people the opportunity to get around the region without driving, tolling will only make it more expensive for people to use the bigger roads, not actually address the many problems associated with congestion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E Ashley Henry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ashley Henry
Executive Director