

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and McClain and members of the committee:

I am sure members of this committee know well that transportation accounts for ~40% of Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions, and is currently trending in the wrong direction. I understand that the question of how to fairly fund the maintenance of our road system as gas tax revenues decline is a difficult policy to craft. However, I am truly mystified at a bill that penalizes Oregonians who choose to drive zero or low emissions vehicles while incentivizing people to keep driving the gas-guzzling SUVs that are *literally* destroying our biosphere.

We need to be rewarding people who are doing the right thing with respect to climate, not charging them disproportionately, thus disincentivizing people from switching to EVs as rapidly as our climate goals require.

I do support the transition to a road user charge instead of the gas tax, BUT only if it is structured so that it urgently prioritizes climate change and equity, in alignment with the state's decarbonization goals and timelines. It must include a charge for vehicles that burn fossil fuels, and should be designed to lessen the impact on low-income drivers of internal combustion vehicles.

Transportation, and transportation funding, can no longer be considered in a wonky vacuum, as a topic siloed from all the other critical day-to-day systems Oregonians depend on, primary among them a livable climate on which all else depends. As more and more people come to the realization that we are living in a climate emergency and running out of time to put out the fire, this committee should expect increasing scrutiny on their decisions, and a lot more worried input from members of the public who are deeply freaked out about their children's future if the climate crisis is not checked.

We desperately need lawmakers to stand up and be unapologetic about what is required to decarbonize our transportation system: our climate, and our children's future can't wait.

Thank you,

Nora Lehmann