



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 102-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 17, 2022

To: [Joint Committee on Transportation](#)
[Senator Lee Beyer](#), Co-Chair
[Representative Susan McLain](#), Co-Chair

Re: [HB 4139-2](#) – Relating to reductions of greenhouse gas emissions in the state's transportation system – **Support**

Because the League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that climate change is a serious threat facing our nation and planet, LWVOR supports climate goals and policies that are consistent with the best available climate science and that will ensure a stable climate system for future generations.

The -2 amendment to HB 4139 addresses the main question we had about the design of the greenhouse gas emissions (ghg-e) reduction program as written in the original bill, i.e., the role of the Oregon Department of Transportation in adopting this program.

In January 2022, ODOT published preliminary data on the ghg-e resulting from highway construction from 2016-2019. The staff has some experience with the use of Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) and the EC3 tool. Meanwhile, research is being conducted nationally and internationally to assess embodied emissions in road and building construction; tools have been developed to simplify access to EPD information. ODOT staff are well positioned to examine the challenging questions we will now be addressing with this bill. We recommend inclusion of a member or consultant to the Technical Advisory Committee with extensive experience in evaluating and utilizing construction materials and methods with low life cycle ghg-e.

Development of pilot programs in the five transportation regions of the state will be essential to evaluating the quality and performance of lower ghg-e materials and construction practices in the diverse environments of Oregon. Construction techniques, material sourcing and other innovative practices to reduce emissions can also be explored.

We are concerned with the long timeline established (5-years) before EPDs may be considered in ranking or scoring bids. This delay does not reflect the climate emergency we are trying to address. ODOT will be investing large amounts of federal IIJA funds over the next five years, and the construction resulting from this windfall should rapidly develop the data needed to evaluate the results of initial emission reduction measures.

Emission reduction goals and timelines are vital to measure progress to a net zero future. We hope to see this structure added to the policy.

Notwithstanding our reservations, we look forward to the adoption of this policy to advance of our emissions reductions goals. Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for SB 4139-2.

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

Claudia Keith
Climate Emergency Coordinator

Julie Chapman
Climate Emergency Portfolio

cc. ODOT Director Kris Strickler, kristopher.w.strickler@odot.state.or.us
Kayla Hootsmans, kayla.R.HOOTSMANS@odot.oregon.gov