

Submitter: RICHARD VU
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3362

I am writing in opposition to the proposed tax on tires as a method of fund raising for the stated environmental and mass transit support reasons. The tax appears to be disguised as a "usage tax" due to the specific targeting of tires. However, some of the revenue from the tax is designated to fund and promote rail transit, which very few people use. The passengers of rail transit are the local population where the rail transit exists, which is primarily only in urban areas. Yet the rural population will be funding this 'usage tax' when they are likely never going to use it. A tax for rail transit needs to be funded by the local population/government where the rail system exists.

One third of the tire tax is dedicated to ODOT for mitigation of pollution caused by tire material being worn off of the tire and migrating into our water ways. Just as runoff waste from many other sources, such as farming, construction, trash disposal in landfills, etc., this should be addressed and studied to determine what the prices impact on aquatic life is. However, ODOT is not the appropriate department to be conducting the mitigation. There is little to nothing that ODOT can do about this issue. ODOT cannot change the materials used in tires, or change the wear rates of tires, or the particle size of the worn off of tires, or reduce the runoff from roads that carry the tire materials to our water ways. This work must be a collaboration with tire manufacturers, not ODOT.

ODOT performs good work and it needs to be fully funded. However, a tire tax is not an appropriate means of funding for them or any of programs that are designated in the bill. Increased registration fees or additional fuel tax would be more appropriate for ODOT's funding. Funding for rail transit should be funded by the localities that host those rail systems.