

Submitter: Russ M.  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3362

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 3362, which proposes a 4% excise tax on the retail sale of tires in Oregon. While I recognize the stated goals of funding rail transit, tire pollution prevention, and wildlife passage infrastructure, this tax represents an unfair and poorly targeted burden on Oregonians that fails to address more pressing needs.

First, this tax disproportionately impacts working families, rural residents, and small businesses who rely on vehicles for daily necessities—especially those who cannot afford newer, more fuel-efficient cars or who live far from public transit options. Tires are not a luxury item; they are essential for safe transportation. Adding a 4% tax on every purchase will increase costs for those already stretched thin by rising living expenses, without offering them viable alternatives like accessible rail transit in their communities.

Second, the allocation of the revenue raises serious concerns. Oregon's roads and bridges are in critical need of repair, yet HB 3362 diverts funds to projects like rail transit—which serves only a small portion of the population—and wildlife crossings, rather than addressing the infrastructure most Oregonians depend on daily. With the state already collecting the nation's 10th highest gas tax, it's unclear why existing transportation funds aren't sufficient, or why federal infrastructure dollars aren't being prioritized for these secondary initiatives instead of piling on new taxes.

Finally, this bill feels like yet another example of misplaced priorities. At a time when Oregonians are grappling with economic recovery, housing costs, and inflation, imposing a new tax to fund niche environmental and transit programs—however well-intentioned—ignores the immediate needs of the majority. I urge lawmakers to reject HB 3362 and focus on solutions that support all Oregonians, not just a select few in urban centers. Let's fix what's broken first—our roads and bridges—before taxing tires for projects that don't deliver broad benefits.

Thank you for considering this perspective.