

Submitter: Douglas Duerst
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3362

Chair(s) and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Oregon House Bill 3362.

This bill, as it stands, unfairly penalizes Oregon farmers and rural communities. It imposes a new financial burden that will disproportionately impact those who can least afford it.

First, I want to emphasize that rural Oregonians, including our farmers, already face significant challenges due to the distances they must travel. We rely on our vehicles and equipment for everything: to get to work, to conduct business, and to support our families. This bill introduces a new tax on tires, a necessity for our daily lives and livelihoods, without considering the unique geographical realities of rural Oregon.

Second, Oregon farmers are currently navigating a continued and unsustainable rise in the cost of production. From fuel to fertilizer, the expenses associated with agriculture are escalating rapidly. Tires are not a luxury for farmers; they are an essential component of agricultural equipment, crucial for transporting products, harvesting commodities, and getting those commodities to the end user. This tire tax would add a new cost at every stage of the production process, further squeezing already tight margins and potentially forcing some farmers out of business.

It is critical to understand that this is not just about a tax on tires. This is about a tax on the backbone of Oregon's agricultural economy. This is about a tax on the very people who work tirelessly to feed our state and beyond.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the funding generated by this proposal does not go to support critical infrastructure investments. It does not address the very roads and bridges that rural Oregonians and farmers depend on. If we are to impose new taxes, they should be directly tied to improving the infrastructure that is so vital to our communities. This bill fails to do that.

Therefore, I urge you to oppose Oregon House Bill 3362. It places an undue burden on Oregon farmers and rural residents, exacerbates existing economic challenges, and fails to address the underlying infrastructure needs of our state.

Thank you