

Submitter: Zachary Steele
On Behalf Of: EVERY TAXPAYER IN OREGON
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025
RE: Opposition to House Bill 2025 (Oregon Transportation Reinvestment Package)

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

As the owner of Steele Insurance Agency Inc. in Dallas, Oregon, I'm writing to express strong opposition to House Bill 2025. While I understand the importance of maintaining and upgrading our state's transportation infrastructure, this bill places an unsustainable financial burden on small businesses, working families, and rural communities.

Our agency serves hundreds of Oregonians, many of whom are already stretched thin by the rising cost of living. The proposed 15-cent gas tax increase, higher vehicle registration fees, and new vehicle transfer taxes will hit low- and middle-income drivers the hardest—especially in rural areas like Polk County, where public transit is limited and personal vehicles are a necessity, not a luxury.

Furthermore, the proposed payroll tax increase for transit, combined with an EV road usage charge and additional DMV fees, adds layers of cost and complexity without a clear, measurable benefit for many parts of the state. This kind of taxation without broad geographic equity risks deepening the rural-urban divide.

Small business owners like myself are already grappling with higher wages, increased commercial insurance rates, and inflationary pressures. We need sustainable solutions—not another one-size-fits-all funding package developed without full bipartisan cooperation or local stakeholder input.

I urge you to vote no on House Bill 2025 and return to the table with a more balanced, transparent, and equitable approach to transportation funding—one that includes real cost control at ODOT and thoughtful prioritization of projects across all communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Zachary Steele
Owner, Steele Insurance Agency Inc.
www.farmersagent.com/zsteele