

Submitter: Jason Van Nimwegen

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Good afternoon, members of the committee.

While I support the goal of maintaining and improving our state's infrastructure, I am writing today to voice my deep concern about the disproportionate and inequitable burden that House Bill 2025 places on working, middle-income families, particularly those living outside the urban core, which is the primary beneficiary of this bill.

My analysis, based on the bill's text, suggests an estimated yearly tax burden of at least \$300 for a typical family. For many households, this is not a nominal fee. We must consider the opportunity cost of that \$300. For a family on a median income, that money can be used for a season of youth soccer, a new set of tires for the car that gets them to work safely, a week's worth of groceries, or the co-pay for a necessary medical procedure. This bill effectively asks working families to sacrifice these essentials.

Furthermore, this legislation creates a "used car penalty." The bill's structure heavily incentivizes the purchase of new, fuel-efficient, and electric vehicles as a way to avoid rising fuel taxes. But for the vast majority of Oregonians who cannot afford a new car, this isn't a choice. They are penalized for driving the used vehicle they already own, with no practical way to opt out of the steadily increasing costs. It is a regressive tax that falls hardest on those with the least choice and the most need to drive.

Finally, this bill forces a geographic inequity. It asks families in Medford, Pendleton, and on the Coast to pay higher taxes on fuel—a necessity for their daily lives where no other transportation options exist—to fund congestion relief on Highway 217 or the I-5 bridge, commutes they will never make and benefits they will never see. It effectively requires the rest of the state to subsidize progress for its wealthiest and most populous region.

I urge you to reconsider this approach and seek a more equitable funding model that does not place the heaviest burden on the working families who can least afford it and who see the fewest benefits. Let's find a solution that strengthens all of Oregon, not just its urban core.

Thank you for your time and consideration.