

Submitter: Barbara Kohnen

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-Chairs McLain and Gorsek, Vice Chairs Boshart-Davis and Starr, and members of the committee:

My name is Barbara Kohnen, and I live in Portland. I'm testifying today because I support a 2025 transportation package that works for all Oregonians and reflects our shared values of safety, affordability, equity, and climate resilience. In particular, I urge you to add vehicle electrification to the bill and fully fund all public safety programs.

Oregon's communities need a transportation system that isn't pumping out carcinogens that we all have to breathe. That isn't contributing to greenhouse gas emissions killing our environment. A transportation system that's affordable and safe. Imagine an Oregon where we move around throughout the state without causing damage to ourselves, the trees, and all other life systems who we depend on.

I believe that we can get there with a better transportation package. It's essential that the bill:

1. Advances our climate goals through electrification infrastructure and incentives for EV purchases.
2. Funds safety first, especially that of walkers and bikers. My family was deeply impacted when our friend Fallon Smart was killed at age 15 while walking across an unmarked crosswalk on Hawthorne Blvd in Portland. She had asked her mother just hours before she was killed about crossing at one. We failed her. Fallon was such a bright and kind young person, and we all suffer without her presence. So many others have died or been injured while walking or biking along the roads. And most of us have had more than one close call. This is unacceptable.

We Oregonians also need much stronger accountability from ODOT to ensure that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and in the public interest. I am heartened to see that this bill will strengthen legislative oversight by focusing on ODOT's performance, climate goals, and safety.

In sum, it's imperative for the health and safety of Oregonians that this transportation package:

1. Fully funds Safe Routes to School, Great Streets, and Oregon Community Paths.
2. Improves air quality and lowers pollution by funding clean transportation programs to help Oregonians purchase electric vehicles, put more clean, zero-emission trucks

on our roads, and expand charging infrastructure statewide.

Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely,