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On Behalf Of:

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Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Argument Against Oregon HB 2025: The Per-Mile Tax and Vehicle Tracker

Oregon's HB 2025, marketed as a transportation funding solution, introduces a per-mile tax with vehicle tracking that raises serious concerns about privacy, cost, and fairness. While the state aims to replace declining gas tax revenue as electric vehicles (EVs) and fuel-efficient cars become more common, the proposed system is flawed and burdensome for Oregonians. Here's why HB 2025, particularly its per-mile tax and tracking mechanism, should be opposed.

Privacy Invasion Through Vehicle Tracking

The per-mile tax relies on vehicle tracking devices to monitor miles driven, a system already in use with Oregon's voluntary OReGO program, which charges 2 cents per mile. These devices, whether plug-in or integrated into vehicles, collect data on driving habits, potentially including location, routes, and times. This raises significant privacy concerns. Without robust safeguards, the government or third-party account managers could access sensitive data, exposing drivers to surveillance or data breaches. Posts on X highlight public distrust, with some calling it "bureaucratic theater" that risks overreach. Unlike a gas tax, which requires no personal data, the per-mile system could track every trip, eroding personal freedom. Even if location data is anonymized, the potential for misuse or hacking remains a real threat, especially as Oregon considers making this mandatory for high-efficiency vehicles by 2026.

Financial Burden on Oregonians

HB 2025's per-mile tax, paired with a 15-cent gas tax hike and doubled DMV fees, disproportionately affects low-income and rural drivers. The OReGO program shows that participants pay 2 cents per mile, which can add up quickly for those who drive long distances, such as rural residents commuting to urban centers. For example, a 50-mile daily commute costs \$1 per day, or \$260 annually, on top of other fees like the 2% new car tax. Unlike gas taxes, which scale with fuel use, the per-mile tax penalizes all miles equally, hitting EV and hybrid owners hardest—those already incentivized to reduce emissions. While OReGO offers savings on DMV fees for EVs (\$35-\$115 annually), these don't offset the tax for high-mileage drivers. This regressive approach burdens those least able to afford it, without clear guarantees that funds will improve roads effectively.

Inequity and Lack of Transparency

The per-mile tax unfairly targets EV and fuel-efficient vehicle owners, who are

already contributing to environmental goals. Oregon's push to phase out gas vehicles by 2035 makes this tax feel like a penalty for adopting greener technology. Meanwhile, gas-powered vehicle owners continue paying traditional taxes, creating a two-tier system. The tracking system's implementation also lacks transparency. The OReGO program uses third-party account managers, raising questions about who handles data and how funds are allocated. Critics on X note the absence of "real accountability" in HB 2025, with no clear plan for structural transportation reform. Without guarantees that funds will directly improve roads, Oregonians are left with a costly, invasive tax scheme.