

Submitter: Steve Ryan

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

I strongly oppose the proposed increases to Oregon's state gas tax and vehicle registration fees. These measures would place an undue financial burden on working families, small businesses, and rural communities, all while failing to adequately address the structural inefficiencies in our transportation funding system.

1. Regressive Financial Impact

Raising the gas tax and vehicle registration fees disproportionately affects low- and middle-income Oregonians. For many families, transportation is a basic necessity, not a luxury. These proposed hikes will force working people to pay more simply to get to work, school, or medical appointments. This is especially unfair at a time when many are still struggling with inflation and rising living costs.

2. Rural and Long-Distance Commuters Hit Hardest

In rural areas where public transit options are limited or nonexistent, driving is the only viable mode of transportation. Residents in these communities often drive longer distances and own older vehicles—meaning they'll feel both the gas tax and registration increases more acutely. This policy effectively penalizes people for where they live.

3. Lack of Accountability and Efficiency

Before asking Oregonians to pay more, the state must ensure that current transportation funds are used efficiently. Too often, budget overruns, delayed infrastructure projects, and misallocated resources undermine public trust. Increasing taxes and fees without meaningful reforms or transparency sends the wrong message and perpetuates a cycle of waste.

4. Discourages Investment in Oregon

Rising vehicle-related costs can also deter businesses that rely on transportation—like logistics companies, contractors, and agricultural operations—from expanding in Oregon. This hurts job growth and economic competitiveness at a time when we should be encouraging local investment.

5. No Long-Term Solution

These tax and fee increases are short-term fixes that fail to address the long-term sustainability challenges of transportation funding, especially with the growing shift toward electric vehicles. Oregon needs a more equitable and forward-thinking funding model—one that reflects changing transportation patterns without

overburdening residents.

In conclusion, while the need for transportation funding is real, the current proposal is the wrong approach. I urge lawmakers to reject these increases and instead pursue more equitable, efficient, and future-proof funding alternatives.