

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

My name is Gary Reiness, and I live in Portland. I support a 2025 transportation package that enhances safety, affordability, equity, and climate resilience. While I think that the proposed package goes some way to achieving those goals, I am concerned that it does not do enough to promote climate resilience, and I strongly encourage you to amend the package to more strongly address this issue.

From my perspective it's essential to pass a transportation package that promotes electrification of our transportation system and reduces dependence on fossil fuels, both by incentivizing electric vehicles and by improving public transit. As a biologist, I have already seen the deleterious impacts of climate change on ecosystems that provide humans with essential services (e.g., cleaning the water and air) and provide recreation and rejuvenation. As a concerned citizen, I have witnessed the impacts of climate change on our state--record-breaking heat waves that cause premature deaths and unprecedented wildfires that are already beginning to devastate Oregon again this year. As a soon-to-be octogenarian, I know that my days of driving are numbered, and that I will become even more dependent than now on public transportation to get to recreation, medical appointments and so forth.

While I understand the need to improve our roads, and the need to raise additional revenue to deal with deferred maintenance and safety improvements, I also strongly believe that some of those new revenues must be designated for addressing climate and mobility needs. In particular, I want to see a transportation package that addresses climate change and improves air quality by funding programs that assist Oregonians to purchase electric vehicles, put more zero-emission trucks and buses on the road, and expand charging infrastructure statewide. I own a plug-in hybrid car rather than my preferred all-electric vehicle because so many parts of Oregon lack the necessary charging options. We have to do better.

Please be sure that the transportation package that you pass ensures a safe, reliable, and sustainable future for all of us and Oregonians of the future.

Sincerely,

Gary Reiness