



## County of Lincoln

### Lincoln County Public Works

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Public Works Director

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June 12, 2025

Re: House Bill 2025 - Transportation Reinvestment Package

Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment,

On behalf of the Lincoln County Public Works Department and the staff that work diligently to maintain a safe, reliable county-road transportation system, I encourage your support in passing a comprehensive transportation funding package this session.

Lincoln County reported a multi-million-dollar annual funding gap in the *Association of Oregon Counties 2024 County Roads Needs Study* to maintain its roads and bridges in compliance with today's safety standards. The funding gap includes costs for a variety of maintenance, operational, and safety needs, all of which can be improved with the passage of HB 2025. Our road and bridge networks were constructed at a time when resources were more plentiful, and without a significant reinvestment to maintain and preserve our infrastructure both their quality and capacity will continue to diminish. Lincoln County supports the committee's effort to develop and pass a comprehensive transportation funding package this session that will not only reinvest in Lincoln County's road and bridge network, but will positively impact Oregon residents, businesses, schools, and varying transportation systems statewide.

Lincoln County owns and maintains over 330 miles of public roads and 87 bridges, including 9 bridges rated in "Poor" condition. While these statistics may not seem dire, the costs associated with maintaining and repairing our infrastructure is extremely prohibitive under current funding conditions, resulting in continuing negative impacts for emergency responders, agricultural equipment, timber-harvests, recreationalists, and other users. These diverse routes in both urban and rural areas are not only vital for local economies but also for ensuring public safety and a continued quality of life.

The funding mechanisms of House Bill 2025 move transportation funding towards a modernized and more sustainable State Highway Fund, and will provide critical funding needed for road maintenance, operations, and safety improvements, while also allowing agencies to begin addressing the growing backlog of deferred maintenance projects across the state, including here in Lincoln County. HB 2025 proposes to invest much needed new revenue in safety, operations, and maintenance across Oregon's shared transportation system, including 50% dedicated to cities and counties via the well-established and successful 50/30/20 model. These additional funds will allow Lincoln County to begin making recommended bridge repairs, establish a pavement preservation program, repair aging equipment, and address long deferred safety projects such as performing guardrail repairs and improving bike lanes.

During the last several decades the federal government has significantly reduced funding for Oregon's rural roads. For example, in the year 2000 Lincoln County received approximately \$2,300,000 in USFS Timber Harvest Payments for road maintenance, however, in 2025 it is only expected to receive approximately \$171,000. The federal Secure Rural Schools Act (SRS), which has provided funding to timber revenue-reliant counties, has not been reauthorized and without Congressional action Oregon

counties will lose over \$30 million annually in federal funding for road maintenance activities. Lincoln County alone is anticipating its resources for FY2025 to be reduced by \$680,000, approximately 10% of its annual operating revenue.

Oregon county road departments continue to face resource challenges from multiple areas, including impacts from inflation, declining tax revenue from fuel consumption, reductions in federal funding, and limited options for raising local revenues. In response, Oregon counties have needed to frequently postpone or even cancel routine maintenance and crucial safety improvements, resulting in a decline in both safety and road quality.

In Lincoln County it has become necessary to reduce several routine maintenance activities, including pavement preservations, guardrail repairs, sign maintenance, and road striping due to gaps between resources and costs. Without additional funding resources, these and other maintenance activities will likely continue to be reduced, resulting in reduced safety for the public and increased risk for the county.

We encourage the legislature to pass a comprehensive transportation package this session that preserves the 50/30/20 share-model of State Highway Funds, modernizes revenue sources, and stabilizes long-term funding, all of which are incorporated in HB 2025. This investment will help ensure that all Oregonians, including those in Lincoln County, have access to safer roads, reliable bridges, and appropriately maintained infrastructure for years to come.

Thank you to the committee for its hard work on this challenging effort. Please drive safely.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mikel Diwan', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mikel Diwan  
Public Works Director  
Lincoln County