

County Commissioners  
Danielle Bethell, Chair  
Colm Willis  
Kevin Cameron



Chief Administrative  
Officer  
Jan Fritz

## MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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June 10, 2025

Co-Chair Senator Chris Gorsek  
Co-Chair Representative Susan McLain  
Co-Vice Chair Senator Bruce Starr  
Co-Vice Chair Representative Shelly Boshart Davis  
Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment

### **RE: Opposition to HB 2025 – Transportation Reinvestment and Innovation Package (TRIP Act)**

Dear Co-Chair Gorsek, Co-Chair McLain, Co-Vice Chair Starr, Co-Vice Chair Boshart Davis, and Members of the Committee,

The Marion County Board of Commissioners writes to express our strong concerns with House Bill 2025, the Transportation Reinvestment and Innovation Package (TRIP Act). While we recognize the need to invest in Oregon's transportation infrastructure, this proposal raises serious concerns about fairness, transparency, and the burden it places on working Oregonians.

We are particularly concerned about the combined use of an increased gas tax and the implementation of a mandatory per-mile road usage charge. This structure effectively results in double taxation for drivers in the future, particularly those in rural counties like Marion, where residents often drive longer distances for work, school, and essential services. The option to pay a flat fee in lieu of the per-mile charge does not alleviate this inequity, it simply shifts the structure of the burden without reducing its impact.

As Oregon's leading agricultural county, Marion County is home to a significant portion of the state's farming industry. Our producers not only contribute to the state's economy but also provide food for families across Oregon and beyond. HB 2025 imposes higher fuel costs and operational fees that will disproportionately affect these essential workers. The agricultural industry relies heavily on fuel and freight movement, and increased transportation costs will ripple through the supply chain, hurting farmers, consumers, and rural economies.

We are also troubled by the proposal to raise taxes and fees for new transportation projects while many critical projects that have already been approved remain incomplete. Before adding new layers of taxation, the state must fulfill its existing commitments and demonstrate progress on previously funded infrastructure improvements.

The proposed 75% increase in the gas tax is an especially heavy lift for low-income residents. These families already struggle with high living costs and limited transportation options.

Increasing the cost of fuel by such a large margin will make basic necessities even harder to access, particularly in communities that depend on older vehicles and lack viable public transit alternatives.

We do want to acknowledge and thank the Legislature for maintaining a revenue-sharing framework that allocates a portion of new transportation revenues to counties and cities. The distribution of 30 percent to counties and 20 percent to cities from the remaining State Highway Fund revenues ensures that local jurisdictions have the resources to address critical infrastructure needs in our communities. This local investment is essential for maintaining road safety, supporting economic development, and preserving the quality of life for Oregonians across both rural and urban areas. We value this partnership and the recognition that transportation solutions must be statewide and locally grounded.

Finally, we are concerned that the bill gives too much discretion to the Oregon Department of Transportation to establish taxes, fees, and enforcement mechanisms through rulemaking rather than legislative action. Tax policy should be decided by elected representatives who are accountable to the people, not by administrative agencies through regulatory processes that lack direct public oversight.

We appreciate the hard work and commitment of the Legislature and this Committee in tackling the complex challenge of funding Oregon's transportation future. We recognize the difficulty of identifying sustainable revenue sources while also balancing the economic realities Oregonians face each day. As partners in serving the people of this state, we welcome continued collaboration to find equitable and transparent solutions that support infrastructure investment without placing undue burdens on working families, farmers, and rural communities. We look forward to working together to achieve a balanced approach that meets Oregon's long-term needs.

Sincerely,



Danielle Bethell  
Chair

Colm Willis  
Commissioner

Kevin Cameron  
Commissioner