

Submitter: Paul Diller

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-chairs Gorsek and McLain:

Oregon's transportation network is woefully underfunded and lacks the capacity to handle the volume of freight and passenger traffic that traverses it on a daily basis. The traffic in the Portland metropolitan area during (the now very long) "rush hour" is awful, and costs commuters thousands of hours a year in delays. The state desperately needs to invest more in all modes of transportation: highway, bike, pedestrian, and public transit. As a longtime commuter from the Portland metro area to Salem, I can say from experience that I-5 is not in good shape and that improved transit alternatives for the Portland-Salem commute would be greatly appreciated.

This bill appears to be a highly imperfect but necessary vehicle for moving Oregon forward in meeting its transportation needs. The bill is imperfect because of its over-reliance on increased registration and renewal fees. I believe that a variable charge like the gas tax would be a better economic tool than a fixed cost on registered vehicles, as the latter imposes the same charge regardless of how many miles a vehicle owner drives. Tolling would also be a more variable charge, but our governor "paused" tolling unilaterally, despite the revenue therefrom being a key component of the 2017 transportation package this body passed. Indeed, the 2017 legislation said that the Oregon Transportation Commission "shall" implement a tolling plan. It would be nice to get an update on where that stands and how long the governor's unilateral "pause" will be in effect.

Regardless, despite the flaws in this bill, some significant investment in transportation from the state would be better than nothing. So I urge you to move forward with the bill.

Sincerely,
Paul Diller
Wilsonville