

Submitter: Paxton Rothwell  
On Behalf Of: Self and future generations of Oregonians  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear members of the Committee,

I support this bill because it continues to invest in Oregon's transportation system. Transportation connects us all whether we are the 33% of Oregonians that cannot drive or the 67% that can. ODOT should serve all Oregonians by providing transportation options and a safe transportation system. Freedom is when every Oregonian has the option to travel safely around their community without feeling like they must get inside a car to do so safely.

We have not invested in alternatives to driving to the extent necessary to actually deliver a functional transportation system. This bill takes a huge step forward in making our transportation system work for every Oregonian.

I applaud the increase in the Payroll tax to fund investments in transit and rail. I applaud the increase in the gas tax and then indexing the tax to inflation. I applaud the increase in vehicle registration fees. I applaud the title transfer and car purchase taxes. And I applaud making EV owners pay their fair share by implementing a mandatory use per mile charge.

I support these fees not because I want to pay them or because I think anyone else wants to. No one wants to pay more for something that they already have. But maintaining our current transportation system and supporting one that relies less on cars is a future I am willing to help fund. Our current system is deteriorating due to years of under-investment and over use. Our public transit is a ghost of what it used to be because we have moved further and further toward car-dependence. I do not want my children and other future Oregonians to be saddled with a world so reliant on cars and hostile to everyone else where bridges are crumbling and streets are pot-holed beyond repair. We have to take a stand against this fossil fuel infrastructure and work to build something better. This bill largely accomplishes that.

I am against funding the Rose Quarter, Abernathy Bridge, IBR, I-205 widening, and the other freeway and highway projects ODOT is pushing for. While these projects seem like wins in the short term, they will bankrupt the state in the long term. We cannot continue investing in private car transport above all else when time and again it is shown to cost more and is much less efficient than public transportation. I ask that before funding ODOT to build these projects, conduct a full audit on their project projects vs cost. Find out where the wasted taxpayer money has gone on these projects before giving them a penny more.

I ask that additional funding be made available for off street multi use paths. And I

ask that the legislature write into law a stipulation that any new freeway and highway projects (even ones that add innocuous auxiliary lanes) be studied for the effect on increasing VMT they would have.

Lastly I strongly feel that you should strike out the section of this bill that calls for 12' minimum vehicle travel lanes on designated freight routes. While I sympathize with the truckers, maintaining higher lanes will only increase travel speeds on these roads by all other drivers. Higher speeds are linked with higher fatality rates. It also promotes a road environment that is actively hostile to everyone outside of a car, which goes against the investments in Great Streets and Safe Routes to School this bill proposes. You can't both invest in safer streets while limiting a jurisdiction's ability to call for a road diet or to narrow lanes. Narrower lanes are safer. And if freight companies want to be able to safely navigate urban and community streets they should begin to phase out their large vehicles for smaller vehicles that are safer for an urban environment. Powell Blvd, TV Highway, 82nd Ave, and more are streets that come to mind that would remain as unsafe as they currently are if the legislature enacts a minimum freight lane width. Oregonians have been calling on lawmakers for years to improve safety on these streets. 12' lanes are bad for everyone.