

Submitter: Emily Polanshek

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

To the Co-chairs and members of the Jt. Committee on Transportation Reinvestment:

My name is Emily Polanshek. I am active on the Transportation Committee of Mobilizing Climate Action Together (MCAT), an all-volunteer organization advocating for state-wide solutions to the growing climate crisis.

Thank you for all your hard work on HB 2025. If this bill passes, especially with some improvements, my hopes for a healthier, more equitable and forward-thinking future will be strengthened.

My greatest concerns are health and safety, reduction in climate pollution and equity for our lowest income residents and rural communities throughout Oregon that need more transportation options besides cars.

As a mother, grandmother and bicycle rider myself, I am thrilled that this bill includes significant funding for Safe Routes to School and Great Streets.

I'm also pleased with the emphasis on Safety, Maintenance, Operations and Preservation. Funding Transit to maintain what we have now rather than cutting back is good. I hope it will stay in the bill as is if not increased.

My husband and I are privileged to have purchased an electric car several years ago, when both state and federal rebates were in place. Our home charger also came with a rebate. Our other two vehicles are electric bikes. We often walk or bike to nearby shopping and we travel by bus, MAX train or Amtrak on occasion.

I believe that investing in transit and multi-modal forms of transportation now are essential for greater equity, lowering toxic emissions and fostering a healthier environment for all Oregonians in the long run. Of course we need safe roads too, so the focus on safety, maintenance, operations and preservation of roadways and bridges is vital. We need to be realistic about large projects – not approve maximum bells and whistles - with much greater, more multi-faceted accountability and oversight of ODOT.

In the short-to-medium run, we badly need to transition away from internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles to electric ones. For this to work, we need to plan for more charging stations. We also need rebates for EV purchases, and not add fees that disincentivize them. Here is a funding solution that I just read:

Add a 4% luxury vehicle tax on vehicles costing more than \$75,000 to fund Oregon

Community Paths, transportation electrification, and cleaner air!

Like many EV owners, my husband and I are in favor of paying road use fees based on weight and mileage. EV drivers should absolutely pay our fair share, but it shouldn't cost MORE to drive an EV than fossil-fueled vehicles.

To prepare for a safe, healthy and livable future, I believe we need to invest more robustly in inner-city and inter-city transit, plus connections between regions within Oregon, to Canada and to surrounding states. An increase in the payroll tax by 0.35% rather than 0.3% would help.

Please be forward-thinking in finalizing HB 2025 so we can move everyone to their destinations safely. I beg you to remember that those who earn the least in our largest population centers usually live the farthest from their jobs or live next to freeways where they breathe the most polluted air.

Let's plan for improved health, safety, equity and for reducing carbon emissions!

Thank you,
Emily Polanshek