

Dear Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Co-Vice Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment,

My name is Claire Turner, a resident of Buxton, Oregon in Washington County. I am writing to express my very strong opposition to HB2025 for the following reasons:

1. Sections 11-43: Diesel Fuel and Motor Carrier Regulation

- a. Current **State Fuel Tax for diesel** is \$0.40/gallon (currently called a Use Fuel). This new regulation would increase the State Fuel Tax for diesel to \$0.50/gallon, an increase of 25% (\$0.10). The name change is a good idea as it simplifies the language used for liquid fuels that power vehicles. On the other hand, the size of the State Fuel Tax increase seems particularly excessive given the size of the previous increase.

My husband drives an F350 truck and works in the Coast Range as a logger. His vehicle usually carries a heavy load, causing the truck to average between 8 – 10 miles/gallon of diesel, and he drives at least 40,000 miles a year. **For that single truck, the new State Fuel Tax would add at least \$500 annually to operating expenses.**

- b. Current **Trip Permits** for light vehicles are allowed twice a year for up to 21 days each. The new trip permits would increase in number from twice a year to three times a year but the big change is the significant reduction in the number of days that each trip permit would be allowed going from 21 days to 3 days.

I have a vehicle that needed to have work done on it and it had expired registration because we haven't used the vehicle in several years. I had to use a trip permit to drive it to our mechanic. Fortunately, he was able to order the parts and get the work done within three weeks so I only needed one trip permit to drive the vehicle from my house to the mechanic, get it repaired, and then drive it back home again. Knowing that I could get a 2nd trip permit to drive it back to the mechanic if additional work needed to be done gave me piece of mind. However, if the new trip permits are only valid for three days, the time period is just too small to allow for any kind of significant work to be done on a vehicle, especially if follow-up work is required. **The length of time that the trip permits are valid should be kept at 21 days.**

2. Sections 45-53: Fuel Tax Increase

- a. Current **State Fuel Tax for gasoline** is \$0.40/gallon. The new tax will be \$0.50/gallon. This increase in state fuel tax will result in a 25% (\$0.10) increase in state fuel tax versus the previous state fuel tax increase of 5% (\$0.02 from 2022 to 2024) which is a significant increase in taxes that I am going to be responsible for.

I am a rural resident. While the \$0.10/gallon may not seem like much for those who live in urban areas who typically drive many less miles and who also have a well-developed public transit system and high density neighborhoods, those of us who live in rural areas will suffer from a much larger hit to our budgets. I live 25 miles away from my church; I grocery shop at least twice a week and those stores are 26 miles away; one son goes to school in Beaverton and work is in Portland, both long-distance daily drives. This additional tax to the cost of fuel will result in **upwards of an additional \$400 in annual expenses just to me because I am a rural resident.**

3. Sections 62-81: Vehicle Fees & Taxes

- a. Current **Annual Registration Fee** for my vehicle is \$43 but the new fee is \$113!! This new fee will be 163% (\$70!) higher than last year.
- b. Current **New Title Fee** is \$77 but the new fee will be \$182!! This new title fee will be 136% (\$105!) higher than last year.

Both of these fee increases are completely unacceptable. While increasing the New Title Fee may be warranted, especially when purchasing a NEW vehicle, those of us who live on a tight budget and must have a car in order to live their daily lives, that additional \$70 every year for registering the car is another every-rising financial hurdle that we have to clear.

I am just one single person, in a household with three adult drivers, each of whom have a personal vehicle. We live in the rural part of Washington County and have no public transportation option. When I factor in the personal driving that my husband has to do on a personal vehicle, and my son has to do as a full-time student at Oregon State University, Corvallis, **our small rural household will pay an additional \$1200 personally in annual vehicle taxes and fees to the State of Oregon. This represents almost 2% of our annual take-home income. This is NOT a viable option for our family and this level of additional expense incurred for a rural family should not be acceptable to the State.**

I support trying to find solutions that work for ALL of Oregon's residents but the financial burden in this bill is too heavily-weighted against rural Oregonians who do not have the benefit of either mass public transit or dense neighborhoods where these expensive costs could be minimized or eliminated by walking, biking, or taking the bus or the Max to work, play, school, or food sources. Instead, we work with what we have... our own vehicles driving whatever distance is needed to ensure that our quality of life can be maintained.

I urge you to please give serious consideration to the significant tax increases that are proposed in HB2025. I feel like at least once a month another proposal is made to add financial burdens that more negatively affect rural residents. The vehicle and fuel tax and fee increases listed in this Bill are too high, too heavy of a burden, particularly when we are already experiencing significant financial challenges and hardships over which we have no control.

Please vote NO on HB2025. Instead, this Bill needs a significant re-write to address the heavy burden that will be placed on rural residents.

Sincerely,
Claire Turner