



350PDX  
3625 N. Mississippi Avenue  
Portland, OR 97227  
350pdx.org

June 12, 2025

Re: HB 2025

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

On behalf of 350PDX, a climate and environmental nonprofit in Portland, I am writing to comment on House Bill 2025, Oregon's proposed transportation funding package. While we appreciate the Legislature's recognition that our transportation system needs significant investment, we have serious concerns about whether this package adequately addresses Oregon's climate commitments and transportation equity needs.

### **Transportation and Climate Crisis**

Transportation remains Oregon's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for nearly 40% of our state's total emissions. The 2020s represent the critical decade for climate action—the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has made clear that global emissions must be cut by 43% by 2030 to avoid catastrophic warming. To positively contribute toward this global goal, Governor Brown's Executive Order 20-04 established ambitious targets in Oregon for carbon neutrality by 2050, with significant interim reductions required this decade.

Since this package extends through 2034 and beyond, we cannot afford to invest billions in infrastructure that locks in fossil fuel car-dependent transportation patterns for generations to come.

### **Misplaced Priorities in Project Selection**

We are deeply concerned that HB 2025 allocates \$125 million annually for highway expansion projects through the Anchor Project Account (Section 110), including the I-205 Freeway Widening Project and Newberg-Dundee Bypass. While the bill also provides \$125 million annually for the Great Streets Fund, this equal allocation sends the wrong message—true climate leadership would prioritize sustainable transportation options over highway expansion.

The bill does include positive elements: \$125 million annually for Great Streets grants (Section 157), \$25 million annually for Safe Routes to Schools, and transit investment through payroll tax increases from 0.1% to 0.3% over time (Section 54-55). However, these investments remain insufficient to create the robust alternatives needed to meaningfully reduce vehicle dependence and emissions.

### **Missing: A Vision for Transportation Choice**

What's most disappointing about HB 2025 is what it doesn't do. Oregon needs a transportation system where people have genuine alternatives to car ownership — reliable transit, safe walking and biking infrastructure, and



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affordable housing near jobs and services. This package continues to prioritize moving cars, rather than moving people sustainably.

As someone who struggles with the high costs of car ownership while living in a city with inadequate transit options, I see daily how our car-centric transportation system creates barriers for working families while harming our climate.

Additionally, the bill's mandatory road usage charges for electric vehicles beginning in 2026 (Section 127) could discourage EV adoption during this critical transition period. While we support fair infrastructure funding, penalizing early climate adopters undermines Oregon's emission reduction goals. The bill also equalizes diesel and gasoline tax rates (Section 11), a positive step that should be paired with stronger incentives for freight emission reductions

### Recommendations

We urge the Legislature to:

1. **Redirect highway expansion funding** toward transit, walking, and biking infrastructure that reduces emissions and improves equity, while retaining funding for maintaining current roads.
2. **Strengthen the Great Streets program** (Section 157) by requiring climate impact assessments for all funded projects and establishing specific VMT reduction targets.
3. **Modify road usage charges** to avoid penalizing EV adopters during the transition period—consider delayed implementation or reduced rates for electric vehicles through 2030.
4. **Require emissions reduction accountability** by mandating that all transportation investments funded through this package demonstrate measurable progress toward Oregon's climate goals.
5. **Address funding equity** by ensuring that revenue sources don't disproportionately burden low-income households, and prioritize investments in underserved communities.
6. **Establish dedicated active transportation funding** beyond the current allocations to create safe, connected networks for walking and biking statewide.

HB 2025 represents billions in transportation investment that will shape Oregon's infrastructure for decades. We cannot afford to lock in car-dependent patterns when climate science demands rapid decarbonization.

Sincerely,

Max Hanley  
Climate Policy Assistant, Transportation  
350PDX