

Submitter: Jacob Cosler

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Introduction

Chair Gorsek, Chair McLain, Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Jacob Cosler, and I speak today in strong opposition to HB2025.

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1. Unprecedented Tax Burden on Oregonians

- This is the largest tax and fee hike in Oregon history, projected at \$15.5 billion over 10 years by the Legislative Revenue Office—far eclipsing prior transportation bills (\$5.3 billion – HB2017) ? ?.

- With Oregon already having the 8th highest cost of living, these increases—covering gas, vehicle sales, registration, titles, EV fees—will sharply intensify financial hardship ?.

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2. Small Business Disproportionately Impacted

- According to the NFIB, this bill imposes \$1 billion/year in new taxes and fees, with 90% of surveyed small firms opposed ?.

- Transportation and fuel costs (natural gas, gasoline, diesel) were rated among the top 6 challenges by small businesses; infrastructure, by contrast, ranked much lower—a sign that HB2025 targets critical business expenses ?.

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3. Sectoral Opposition: Water Professionals Speak Out

- The Oregon Groundwater Association (OGWA) strongly opposes HB2025 due to the steep increases: gas tax +37.5%, \$70+ title fees, \$50+ registration fees, per-mile EV fees, arguing further strain is untenable for families and businesses ?.

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4. Lack of Transparency & Process Concerns

- HB2025 was largely crafted behind closed doors, late in session (released when 88% of the session was already complete), and rushed toward

approval—leaving inadequate time for meaningful public review ?.

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5. Prioritize Core Needs & Improve Oversight Instead

- Critics argue we should focus funding on essential maintenance, not extensive new programs, by redirecting existing funds and eliminating waste ?.
- HB?2025 does include performance audits of ODOT. However, multiple elected officials (like Sen. Meek) and counties such as Jackson County say more targeted, accountable investments are needed rather than sweeping tax hikes ?.

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Recommended Alternative

Opponents urge the Legislature to:

1. Pause HB?2025 and reopen the process for robust public input.
2. Scale back tax hikes, concentrating only on essential road and bridge upkeep.
3. Redirect existing revenue from lower-priority projects to core infrastructure.
4. Strengthen ODOT accountability, expanding upon existing audit provisions.

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Conclusion

HB?2025 places an unsustainable financial burden on households, small businesses, professionals, and rural communities—without adequate justification, transparency, or evidence of prioritized outcomes. I urge the Committee to oppose this bill, seek targeted and responsible solutions, and ensure that any investment made is necessary and fair.

Thank you.