

Submitter: TOM MESSENGER

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Co-Chairs Pham and McClain, members of the JCTR:

The common sense perspective:

HB 2017 was to be a bold step in a new direction for ODOT. Sadly, very sadly, it failed.

Oregon is OVERDUE for change at the top of ODOT and a new direction. We CANNOT keep pouring \$\$\$\$ down a rat hole (no disrespect to the rat) and expect ODOT to improve.

The external study CLEARLY showed a major set of changes needed in ODOT. I totally agree.

The first change is to put in place a new director of ODOT. Then have that director work on the appropriate structural changes needed, many of which were proposed by the external review. It was NOT the purview of the external review to tell you - Oregon needs a new head of ODOT. As I have said before, with experience, major changes to a large organization will not happen and attempts will fail if the person at the top is not replaced. Kris is a nice guy but just not the right person for the job.

The OTC also is a waste! Please eliminate it.

With the very short frame before the end of session, what can you do? Simply, stay with the existing ODOT budget for the next biennium FOR NOW. Then, work with the Governor to make the changes re the OTC and the head of ODOT. A suggestion for an interim head of ODOT would be to hire either one of the external contractors (or both?) as interim head of ODOT. Then do a nationwide search for a new head of ODOT.

This is, from where we are, the simplest and best path forward.

Thanks for listening!!!

All the best,
Tom Messenger
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