



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

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A Trusted Partner for Oregon's Forest Operators

June 26, 2025

The Honorable Senator Khanh Pham and Representative Susan McLain
Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE; Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Oppose — HB 2025-28, Transportation Revenue Raising Bill

Dear Co-Chairs Pham and McLain, and Joint Committee Members:

I am writing to offer comment concerning the proposed HB 2025-28 (6/25/25), Transportation Revenue Bill.

Please accept these comments on behalf of Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc. (AOL), representing over 900 member businesses and approximately 20,000 people working in Oregon's rural forest contract sector statewide. Our trade association provides voice and business services to these small forest enterprises that manage, own, grow, construct, maintain, protect, and transport materials and workers from forest to market. We represent interests of the forest contract trades businesses that conduct reforestation, firefighting, thinning, harvesting, roading, construction, aggregate, improvement, vegetation release, utility clearing, and trucking.

Oregon's public roads and highways are a vital foundation for this state's forest business productivity and its transportation necessary to access and manage 30 million acres of forestland and to sustain Oregon's top-three traded good industry: our forest sector.

➤ **We oppose HB 2025-28, Transportation Revenue Bill**

- *The overreaching Bill's costs would irreparably damage our transportation-based forest sector and the rural communities where we live and prosper.*
- *Bill would harmfully stifle the future economic development, growth, and innovation necessary to foster Oregon's forest sector success in a competitive North American marketplace for renewable forest products.*
- *Bill would perpetuate the costly inefficiencies and lacking accountability within Oregon's transportation funding, ODOT, and infrastructure.*

➤ **Alternatively, we support the Republican Transportation Funding Plan (LC 4934), which would preserve core ODOT operations and maintenance functions critical in rural Oregon. This proposal would stabilize ODOT without inflating Oregonian cost of living.**

HB 2025-28 fiscal impacts and costs to Oregonians are too high and lack accountability reforms

- We cannot accept enacting new, deep, higher tax and fee costs and more administrative burdens on all business sectors and all Oregonians. Additionally, this higher spending and taxation would be channeled to broken transportation agencies procedures and non-highway priorities—while lacking sufficient efficiency reforms and ODOT accountability upgrades. Forcing an estimated \$11.5 billion impact onto Oregonians during the last moments of the Legislative Session without sufficient engagement is unfair, harmful, and lacks transparency.



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HB 2025-28 would unacceptably increase weight-mile taxes for trucking and detrimentally introduce a diesel tax in 2028.

- Oregon is already one of the most expensive states for commercial trucking and to operate a trucking company. This bill would make an even more expensive burden on all commercial truckers—making Oregon truckers less competitive with those businesses in other states. Furthermore, the supply-chain impact of increased trucking costs would make all Oregon business sectors less competitive with those in other states.

HB 2025-28 would destructively remove language that ensures trucking can adjust weight mile taxes if the Highway Cost Allocation Study shows inequity.

HB 2025-28 harmfully includes a 12-cent gas and diesel tax increase starting in 2026. Even worse, starting in 2028, trucking would double-pay that higher diesel rate PLUS an increased weight mile tax rate.

HB 2025-28 would significantly gouge Oregonians with many added new and increased transportation-related fees. Many of these fee increases are greater than 100%.

HB 2025-28 would wrongly punish working Oregonians with higher transit taxes and car sales taxes. This would lower the standard of living for Oregonians.

HB 2025-28 was prejudiced in its secret development. Rate payers of the transportation system were not fairly invited to the table to discuss or meaningfully shape the Bill policy or its rates.

HB 2025-28 would unfairly divert Highway Trust Fund dollars—revenue paid by car and truck owners to maintain Oregon's roads—to non-highway uses. Lower-priority uses that neither improve safety or transportation capacity.

HB 2025-28 neglects to implement efficiency recommendations from the ODOT consulting firm report. The Republican Transportation Funding Plan (LC 4934), which would preserve core ODOT operations and maintenance functions critical in rural Oregon.

HB 2025-28 adds unproductive higher tax and excessive spending on non-essential programs

- Proposed increases in spending and new taxation to support non-essential and unaffordable programs that fail to directly contribute to highway safety, commerce, and capacity growth of highway infrastructure, such as excessive spending on items of unfounded value in a statewide perspective—wildlife crossings, curb ramps on rural highways, EV subsidies, EV charging, clean truck rules, pedestrians, bicycles, transit, passenger rail, and others.
- Economic growth, rural commerce, industry, and community issues are not effectively balanced among all competing interests currently-viewed from a myopic urban-only lens.
- Insufficient funding priority to address longstanding concerns over crumbling roads, weakened bridges, and capacity growth for overcrowded roadways.



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HB 2025-28 fails to grow commerce, population and transportation capacity, such as:

- Our transportation priorities should be focused on growth opportunities for commerce, rather than adding more policies that limit business, employment, and transportation of goods-services-people.
- State and local road access is vital to growing safe sustainable transportation for commerce, tourism, workforce, and public services—especially for rural communities and industries.
- Oregon's aging highway transportation system is increasingly an obstacle to efficient rural forest and farm commerce. Too many highways are dis-maintained, unsafe, under-performing, over-capacity, and antiquated. We must improve our state and local highway transportation system to grow Oregon business investment and compete in an uncompromising global economy.
- Codify transportation's role in growing Oregon's economy. Oregon society and commerce can best thrive through growth into new and contemporary access to global markets, ports, products, services logistics, and technologies. Such critical growth and sustainability cannot prosper under the burden of a deteriorating and inaccessible transportation system.
- Integral to managing half of Oregon's landscape—its rural forestlands—is heavy trucking and highway transportation access from rural forests to manufacturing centers, ports, communities, workforce, and out-of-state markets. Safe highways and trucking are essential to Oregon's top-3 traded good economy—the forest sector.

Conclusion

We oppose HB 2025-28, the Transportation Revenue Bill. We support finding transportation solutions together with future Legislatures, which would be fair and sustainable for growing ALL-Oregon business, workers, trucking, ports, and a safe transportation system. Respecting and advancing the productivity of small-business forest communities will provide a more abundant economy, when Oregon's rural forests and farms are part of the transportation solution.

Finally, forest sector working families, forest truckers, and rural businesses cannot prosper or grow under the burdens of Oregon's higher taxation and fees, an inefficient ODOT, existing deteriorating highways, excessive urban-centric spending, and disproportionate vehicle taxation barriers on business. We can do better for our ALL-Oregon robust and growing economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment about working families and rural forest business transportation.

Sincerely,

Rex Storm, Certified Forester, Executive Vice President, Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.