

Dear Chairs Pham and McLain and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment,

My name is Theresa Hausser and I am a rural woodland owner in Vida in Lane County.

I urge you to vote no on the transportation bill (HB 2025) so that it might be re-crafted to be more equitable to all Oregonians.

As a former Californian, I well know the burdens of exorbitant gas taxes, vehicle registration fees, and drivers' license fees. I also know that those exorbitant fees do not necessarily translate to safer roads.

Now, as a rural woodland owner/manager and Oregonian, I can see how these proposed fees and taxes disproportionately affect rural Oregonians. Just doing fuels mitigation on our already-burned woodland could become prohibitively expensive. We happily started our woodland work with battery-operated tools. Post-fire, with the pioneer species (blackberries, scotch broom, invasive grasses) thriving, we've had to move to a stable of gas-powered brushing tools--because our battery tool's battery compartment caught fire from the workload.

I never thought I would so appreciate Oregon's lack of a sales tax. Sales taxes have a disproportionate negative impact on the less-wealthy. The transportation bill's fees and taxes further narrow that disproportionate negative impact to rural dwellers and industries. Now, instead of a statewide sales tax which is burdensome to the less wealthy, we have a proposed tax and fee structure that is unpleasant for some of the population and devastating for those of us who rely on gas power to manage our lands, harvest food and fiber, and transport food and wood products to all of us who use them (all of us).

Please vote no on this bill and craft something worthy of Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration.