

Submitter: Andrea Burnham
On Behalf Of: myself
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

I'm writing in strong support of House Bill 2025, the Transportation Reinvestment Package.

We hear time and time again that Oregonians want safe roads, and that we want everyone to come home safely to their families each day. Yet, fatal crashes and serious injuries continue to rise across our state. If this bill doesn't pass, we will have failed the people of Oregon and we will have failed the dedicated people at ODOT working every day to prevent these tragedies.

We can't keep saying we want to improve safety and then ask, "ODOT, what are you doing to stop people from dying on our roads?" while at the same time refusing to provide the resources necessary to do that work. We can't expect lifesaving infrastructure and services without making real investments as taxpayers.

One of the reasons we're in this position today is because the funding can has been kicked down the road, session after session. We've told ourselves: "The roads aren't that bad." Or "ODOT just needs to pull itself up by the bootstraps." We've focused on repeated audits and accountability measures but too often, we've avoided addressing the root cause: the lack of sustainable, dedicated funding.

The Legislature can authorize incredible, beautiful projects but if we don't fund the people and systems needed to maintain them, we dig ourselves into a deeper and deeper financial hole. We risk losing the very benefits those projects were designed to deliver.

Another point that's often misunderstood is that ODOT operates with two separate funding streams: federal capital improvement funds and state funds. By law, federal dollars cannot be used for maintenance. So while it may appear ODOT has money for large projects, those funds cannot be used to patch potholes, maintain guardrails, run DMV offices, or respond to fatal crash scenes. That's where this state funding is so critical.

HB 2025 helps ODOT continue the day-to-day work that directly supports community safety and mobility—everything from answering AskODOT inquiries, to restriping roads, to installing low-cost but high-impact improvements like oversized signage. These are often the most effective and affordable safety tools we have, but without

this bill, they may be out of reach.

Lastly, I urge you to support this bill as a vote of confidence in the hardworking people at ODOT. We've been asked for years to do more with less working long hours, juggling increasing demands, and breaking a little inside every time someone is hurt or killed on our roadways. We are not just employees we are your neighbors, and we care deeply about this state and its people.

Please support HB 2025. Let's give Oregon the safe, resilient, and responsible transportation system it needs and let's give the people doing the work the resources they deserve.