

Submitter: Marsha Morin, State of Oregon (33 years)

On behalf of:

Committee: Joint Special Session Committee on Transportation Funding

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB 3991

I am in **opposition** to the HB3991 Transportation the key reasons being mismanagement of funds by the ODOT administration and the fact that we cannot continue to pass the cost of this mismanagement to ODOT employees and the Oregonians through increased taxes and fees. I did submit written testimony for the committee meeting held on Monday, August 25, 2025, which detailed specific areas I opposed and why. I have included that testimony at the end of this memo.

Though I fully oppose this bill, I also **fully oppose increasing fees and taxes, or laying off the represented and unrepresented employees of the Oregon Department of Transportation.** Instead of doing these I would ask ODOT, the Governor's office, DAS and the Legislature to look outside the box to find solutions. I know many of you are wanting to look at other options as well, below are some ideas I've either had or have been mentioned to me:

- **Move responsibility or funding of Homeless Camp cleanup to Health and Human Services.** ODOT Maintenance is paying for homeless camp cleanup. Though I can understand they have the equipment to do this safely, I do not believe the cost of this cleanup should lie with ODOT. ODOT should be able to charge the appropriate entity for this service. Equally I hope employees on these cleanup teams are being paid hazard pay for such work that is well beyond the scope of highway maintenance.
  - I would prefer we resolve the homeless problem instead, but in the meantime charging that as a service would assist in ODOT's funding shortfalls.
- **Divert privilege tax money** from transit to the maintenance program.
- **Require Portland to either clean up their own graffiti or reimburse the state for the cleanup.** There was a mention from the Governor's presentation that they would like to keep up partnerships with Portland in removing the graffiti. Stop that all together, Portland and any other city or county needs to solve that problem by fixing the source issue which would be those spraying the graffiti.
- **Re-evaluate the Sanctuary laws** to conform to the federal requirements so federal moneys can once again come into Oregon. It is the choice of legislature and the governor to not do that and any losses in federal funding because of that should not be recouped in the form of taxes, fees, or layoffs.
- **Put the Rose Quarter project on hold** and use those dollars to fill the budget gap. Then re-evaluate to determine what really needs to be done to improve traffic flow through that area.
- Right size Executive/Management positions at ODOT:
  - There is one agency head position that earns \$288K annually

- There are 39 Executive Service Positions and of this 24 make over \$150K a year.
- There are 634 Management Position
  - 5 positions earn over \$200K annually
  - 167 over \$150K annually
  - 369 over \$100K annually
  - 93 earn between \$50K & 100K annually
- There are 3,924 Represented and Unrepresented employees. The employee to management ratio is approximately 6 to 1; 5 to 1 if you include executives. That's management top heavy. The presentation during the Monday committee meeting listed categories of employees they were cutting but were not specific on management, exec, represented, unrepresented. It says they were cutting 103 management positions. Since management and executive positions can include non-supervisory support level positions, I would be curious to know specific positions. I think focus can be placed on supervisory and executive level positions.
- Evaluate the need of positions and programs at ODOT:
  - Director of Civil Rights and Engagement
  - Office of Equity and Civil Rights
- I have long thought that our agencies heads do not have strong leadership skills. I think this needs to be forced on them. One thought I had was instead of earmarking money for certain projects, the legislature should give each agency a total sum for their agency budget and basically marching orders on what special projects they need to complete for the biennium. Then it is on the agency director to budget wisely to maintain current service levels and complete assigned projects within the budget provided them. If they need to move some money over from special projects because of massive repair issue, they can do that. At the end of the two years if that director hasn't accomplished the legislative goals without good reason for the failure, their future employment in that position should come into question.