

HB 4126 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Transportation

Action Date: 02/16/26

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 5-2-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Evans, Gamba, Mannix, McLain, Nathanson

Nays: 2 - Boshart Davis, Helfrich

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/11, 2/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure directs the Department of Transportation to submit a biennial report to the legislature recommending a rate for the per-mile road usage charge that would sustainably raise the revenue necessary to maintain the public highways in Oregon. It directs the first report to be submitted no later than January 31, 2027. The measure declares an emergency, effective on its passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The study providing empirical data for managing the transportation system
- Pavement as a specific concern in many communities
- Bridge and culvert maintenance
- 2024 County Road Needs Study
- Unlikely to ever achieve 100 percent good repair

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment requires the report to break down total vehicle miles driven by weight classifications for medium-duty vehicles between 10,000 and 26,000 pounds for each 2,000-pound grouping. It changes the date of the first report to no later than January 31, 2027, and adds an emergency clause.

BACKGROUND:

The legislature created the Road User Fee Task Force (RUFTF) in 2001 to develop a revenue collection system to fund Oregon's roads and highways that could replace the existing gasoline tax. Because motor fuel taxes had not kept pace with inflation and the vehicle fleet's mileage ratings had steadily improved for two decades, revenues for maintaining and improving the state's road system had not kept pace with need. The RUFTF studied 28 options and ultimately determined that a new system should be designed to assess costs to drivers based on the number of miles driven on public roads and highways in Oregon.

Two pilot programs were conducted in 2006–2007 and 2012–2013, during which technology and administration were tested and refined for the program. In 2013, the legislature enacted Senate Bill 810, creating a permanent voluntary program, known as OReGO, in which up to 5,000 vehicles could pay 1.5 cents per mile in lieu of the gasoline tax. Drivers use onboard, connected technology to track miles traveled on Oregon public roads and are billed for costs accrued that exceed the amount of gas taxes paid.

House Bill 4126 A directs the Oregon Department of Transportation to conduct a biennial study of both the estimated cost to maintain Oregon's system of roads and the estimated number of miles traveled for light- and medium-duty vehicles in Oregon. These calculations are intended to determine the level at which a per-mile road usage charge should be set for all light- and medium-duty vehicles to adequately fund the state's road system.