



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

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February 9, 2026

The Honorable Chris Gorsek, Chair
Senate Committee On Transportation

Subject: SB 1543 -1: **Testimony Expressing Concern**

Chair Gorsek, ViceChair Weber and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Amanda Sullivan-Astor, and I am here on behalf of the Associated Oregon Loggers. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and to share our concerns with the dash 1 amendment to SB 1543. Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL) represents nearly 900 forest operators in Oregon dedicated to sustainable forest management and the economic vitality of our communities. AOL plays a crucial role in advocating for practices that ensure the health and longevity of Oregon's forests, while also supporting the livelihoods of thousands across the state.

Our industry depends on a transportation system that is reliable, predictable, and financially stable. Logging operations rely heavily on state highways and bridges to move heavy loads safely and legally. Decisions about transportation finance and long-term planning have direct impacts on worker safety, business viability, and the economic health of rural Oregon.

We are most concerned about the approach taken in the dash-1 amendment related to bonded indebtedness and long-term financial guardrails.

It replaces a clear percentage-based limitation on bonded debt with broader, less-defined language intended to protect future budgets. While flexibility can be useful, the absence of a clear and measurable standard creates uncertainty for industries like logging that depend on long-term infrastructure investment and predictable maintenance funding. We believe clear guardrails are critical to ensure future budgets can continue to support priorities of rural natural resources sectors.

For logging operators, uncertainty in transportation finance translates into real-world consequences. It is critical that bridges can continue to carry heavy loads legally and roads are maintained before weight restrictions are imposed for our members. Deferred investment or unclear financial direction disproportionately impacts rural areas and rural businesses like forest contracting and log trucking where alternatives are limited, transportation is expensive due to remote work and distances are long with large, sometimes statewide, operating circles.

The Associated Oregon Loggers urge the committee to carefully consider whether the dash-1 amendment on 1543 provides sufficient clarity and long-term stability to support Oregon's transportation system. We stand ready to work with the committee and ODOT on solutions that ensure responsible debt management, protect core maintenance funding, and support the safety, jobs, and economic vitality of Oregon's rural industries.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Amanda Sullivan-Astor, CF

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