

February 11, 2026

Re: Support SB 1542

Dear Chair Gorsek, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Committee on Transportation,

The 350PDX Transportation Team appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony regarding our support for SB 1542. As an advocacy organization dedicated to the long-term well-being of Oregonians, we strongly support this measure as a vital step toward fiscal stewardship and good governance. Oregonians deserve a transportation system that is accountable and honest about where its money is going.

What We Support in SB 1542

- **Objective Prioritization:** SB 1542, the "Measure What We Drive" bill, provides a necessary framework for objective prioritization in state transportation spending. By requiring a 10-year capital investment plan backed by a clear scoring methodology, it ensures projects are selected based on merit and state need. We will put our dollars toward the most necessary projects.
- **"Fix-it-First" Mandate:** A central pillar of this bill is preserving existing assets. It is a fundamental principle of fiscal responsibility to maintain our current roads and bridges before committing to the massive long-term liabilities associated with new capacity.
- **Cost-Benefit Transparency:** The requirement for a publicly available cost-benefit analysis at least 30 days before a project's approval is a basic standard for public trust. This allows for an evaluation of whether projected benefits — such as freight efficiency or safety — actually justify an investment from taxpayers.

Recommendations

1. **Strengthen ROI Standards:** Ensure the scoring methodology explicitly weighs the long-term maintenance costs of new projects against the economic return of maintaining existing corridors.
2. **Mandate Preservation Targets:** Set specific, measurable targets for the percentage of the 10-year plan dedicated strictly to preservation (maintenance) versus new capacity to ensure the "Fix-it-First" philosophy is enforceable.
3. **Public Accessibility:** Ensure the 30-day cost-benefit disclosure is presented in a standardized, easy-to-read format that allows for clear comparison between competing projects.
4. **Audit Integration:** Require that the scoring methodology be reviewed by the Secretary of State's Audits Division biennially to ensure the data used for project prioritization

remains accurate and unbiased.

In an era of tightening budgets, we cannot afford to guess which projects will serve Oregon best. SB 1542 provides the tools necessary to move from a "build-first" mentality to a "results-first" strategy. We urge the committee to support SB 1542 to ensure our transportation investments are transparent and fiscally sound.

Sincerely,

Max Hanley
For the 35OPDX Transportation Team