

Written Testimony to the House Transportation Policy Committee on HB 3231

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council opposes HB 3231.

The times of building major new freeways are over, even in places like the Portland metropolitan area where the population is growing. Why? Because demographic and technological trends point to less driving over time, not more. Massive freeway expansion is a solution from the past that is ill-fit for the future.

Consider these trends:

- [Millennials drive less](#) than their parents and show a clear preference for bicycling, walking and taking transit. This has held true post recession. Millennials comprise 27% of Oregon's population.
- As Baby Boomers age, fewer and fewer will be able to drive. Our seniors need options in order to age in place, not more freeway capacity. Baby Boomers represent 25% of Oregon's population, and Oregon is in top 1/3 of projected senior growth rates in country.
- Not only has per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) declined in Oregon, but also total VMT. See [The Road Less Traveled Is in Oregon](#). Although we may see spikes in VMT, the long term trend is downward (see below).

Businesses are choosing to locate where they can attract Millennials. Realtors also understand what demographic trends and changing preferences mean for their industry. [National Association of Realtors polling](#) finds that a majority of Americans would prefer not to live in neighborhoods that require more driving between home, work and recreation, preferring instead to live in neighborhoods with a mix of houses, stores, and other businesses that are within walking distance.

Complementing the above trends, technology is changing the way we get around. A simple app tells you when the next bus is coming; streetlights are timed to move transit more quickly; and you can hail a Transportation Network Company (e.g., Lyft, Uber) when transit doesn't fit the bill. [PricewaterhouseCoopers predicts](#) the number of

vehicles on the road will fall from 245 million to 2.4 million vehicles by 2025. Milder predictions say traffic will drop by a factor of ten.

It simply does not make financial sense to spend billions on road expansion that isn't necessary, especially when this particular project would pave over important farm, forest, and natural resource areas.

We urge you to abandon HB 3231. Thank you for your consideration.