

To: Clackamas County Legislative Delegation

From: The Business Community of Clackamas County

Date: June 2, 2017

Re: Support for State Transportation Funding Package

On behalf of the business community in Clackamas County, we would like to share our full support for a robust state transportation funding package that addresses the critical funding needs of the state, counties, cities and transit providers.

Businesses require a full functioning transportation system in order to thrive. Our goods need to move freely through populated areas in order to reach the port or other destinations, and our employees require ease of access to and from work. All across the state, businesses are struggling to transport their product as congestion in the Portland metropolitan area worsens, and employees are harder to retain and attract because hours of congestion can separate where people work from where they can afford to live. As a business voice in Clackamas County, we believe that a funding package of \$1 billion per year, as recommended by the Oregon Transportation Commission, is necessary to meet the transportation needs of the state. In particular, we want to emphasize four categories of critical needs that should be addressed in any transportation funding package from the State:

Relieve Metropolitan Area Congestion

Funding for projects to relieve congestion at bottlenecks like I-205 in Clackamas County between the OR99E interchange in Oregon City and the Stafford Road interchange, including the Abernethy Bridge, is essential. Widening I-205 to three lanes at this location has been identified locally and is recognized statewide as one of the most important congestion relief projects in Oregon. This project, along with the I-5 Rose Quarter project in Portland and the OR217 project in Washington County, must be treated as critical investments for a sustainable Oregon economy. Delay in fixing these high congestion segments affects not only local residents and businesses, but also businesses throughout Oregon that must use these routes to move product to the Port of Portland and the Portland International Airport.

Prioritize Transit

We request that you support new funding resources for the transit systems in the state. In Clackamas County we depend on service from the largest transit system in Oregon (TriMet) but also are home to five medium to small transit systems in our outlying areas. All six are vital to the Clackamas County economy and the health and mobility of our employees and customers. Data shows that Oregon ranks among the five lowest states in the nation in the amount of funding provided to transit. It is time for Oregon to step up and prioritize this issue.

Support Increased Funding for Transportation System Preservation and Maintenance

We request that you support transportation funding legislation that provides increased and predictable funding mechanisms needed to maintain and improve our roads and highways in the most efficient manner possible. The state, counties and cities have all identified large gaps between needed and available funding for preservation and maintenance. Clackamas County alone has identified a shortfall of \$17 million per year. While addressing congestion is our number one priority for improving the movement of goods, it is equally important to ensure that our local communities remain livable to ensure our businesses can thrive.

Investment in Creating Jobs through Increases in Connect Oregon Funding

ConnectOregon has proven to be one of the best investments that the Legislature makes to increase the economic advantages of Oregon. As businesses that rely on transportation networks beyond trucks, we ask that you support restoring the ConnectOregon program to its original funding level - \$100 million each biennium. The ports, rail networks and airports of the state are critical to Oregon's economic competitiveness. The ConnectOregon grant program provides funds to improve all of these vital "non-road" transportation systems to help keep Oregon's economy strong and vibrant.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our requests. We look forward to working with you in this effort to ensure that the state's transportation systems support our economy and enable the rapid and safe movement of people and freight throughout Clackamas County and the rest of Oregon.

Sincerely,

The Business Community of Clackamas County

