

Subject: Testimony for the public hearing HB2017 Requires Department of Transportation to study improving this state's transportation system, June 6, 2017

Whom ever says we live in a sharing economy must truly be joking - especially as it applies to transportation funding in Oregon. Equity requires sharing the road must also require sharing the financial responsibility.

For whatever reason, the bicycle lobby along with bicycle activists seem to think bicyclists have special privileges and immunities, not only to ignore traffic control devices and laws, but they expect everything including specialized bicycle infrastructure for free as if it is an entitlement. There is well over 800 million dollars in Portland's Transportation System Plan to accommodate bicycles. Establishing an excise tax on luxury bicycles is a good start, but not enough. Adult bicyclist also need to be paying user and license fees.

One two-axle transit bus does as much damage to the roads as 1000 plus cars. On a fully loaded bus with 50 passengers, each person is doing the damage of more than 20 cars. Transit fares on average cover only 25% of the operating costs. Public transit is taxpayer subsidized at over 60 cents per passenger mile. Including in Portland, public transit on average uses more energy per passenger mile as measured in BTUs, and creates more emissions per passenger mile as measured in Co2, than driving a fuel efficient car. Transit fares need to be taxed to help pay for the roads.

Nearly 10% of the jobs in the United States are tied to the auto industry. New car dealerships provide an average of 60 private sector jobs. In Portland, 59% of low income people drive to work.

There is protective language in the Oregon Constitution that forbids special privileges and immunities. When written, the likely intent was to be applied in a broad sense of purpose. Assessing only a token tax on luxury bicycles while excessively and unjustly piling on more motorist paid taxes and fees when some of the money will in actually subsidize the alternatives is a direct contradiction to the principal of the special privileges and immunities clause..

Both bicyclists and public transit buses utilize roads and bridges, and in many cases have specialized infrastructure that cars and trucks can not or are not allowed to use. All too often the addition of bike lanes - such as with so called road diets - also creates more uncalled for congestion. A more equitably balanced and proportional assessment of taxes and fees needs to be legislated. The alternative modes need to become far more financially self-sustainable with bicyclists and transit users paying a greater share of the costs for infrastructure.

Additional taxes and fees need to be assessed on the alternatives along with a reduction to what is being proposed for motorists

Respectively submitted,

Terry Parker

P.O. Box 13503

Portland, Oregon 97213-0503

Northeast Portland