

Dear Legislature,

I'm writing regarding HB 2017, relating to transportation preservation & modernization.

A bill that doubles down on infrastructure to support automobiles cannot be called a "modernization" effort; internal combustion engines and cars are a primary cause of greenhouse gas emissions and road fatalities in Oregon, and represent a previous generation of technology that has now been superseded by the need to assemble a truly multimodal transportation system.

What we need to invest in is statewide intercity electric rail to move passengers and freight between our cities without using fossil fuels or contributing to safety issues and congestion on our roadways.

What we need to invest in are statewide efforts to complete our bicycle and pedestrian transportation networks, so that people can choose to walk or ride their bicycles for as short or as long a distance as they choose, without being limited by our transportation network's deficiencies.

What we need to be focusing on are transportation investments that have a net negative impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

We should not be stealing from the pocketbooks of the next generation to subsidize the poor transportation investment choices of previous generations.

We should not be doubling down on our freeway infrastructure while neglecting the need to expand our transit infrastructure. We cannot build our way out of congestion; widening 217 and 205 will cost hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars, while delivering no net benefit to our state. The extra capacity will be immediately filled, and will not contribute in the slightest to the easing of congestion. It will, however, rob funds away from investments in transportation alternatives that would provide for more accessibility for a greater number of people. We should instead be investing in electric frequent fixed-guideway higher-speed transit and new separated bicycle & pedestrian facilities in each of these corridors, to provide alternatives to the automobile.

The solution to congestion on our roadways should be congestion pricing. If there are too many people using something offered for free, pricing is the way that we should address the scarcity. The revenue from congestion pricing should be used to super-charge the construction of zero-carbon-emission transportation infrastructure that provides alternatives to driving.

Finally, the bill summary page for this legislation does not calculate the estimated climate impacts. In order to take seriously our commitment to reducing GHG emissions, I propose that all legislation be graded for its estimated impact on GHG emissions, and that the State of Oregon only fund those bills with a neutral or net negative impact on GHG emissions. This page should show, in addition to the fiscal and revenue impact, the estimated GHG impact:

<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Measures/Overview/HB2017>

As far as I can tell without that information, this bill, as currently proposed, is a regressive waste of taxpayer resources that will cause a net increase in GHG emissions while delivering little benefit to our communities. It must be re-written or rejected.

Thanks for your hard work and all you do.

Sincerely,

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