

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to communicate my concern about the transportation bill, HB 2017. While the stated goal of the bill is to reduce congestion and reduce pollution, I must urge you not to support this bill in its current form, because the actual provisions of the bill will do the opposite.

This bill allocates over \$1 billion for widening highways within Portland. We do not want our highways widened. Widening highways will only cause induced demand that will increase congestion, not decrease it.

The bill uses a bicycle sales tax to fund bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements. This might seem only fair at first blush, but consider: people on foot and on bike do not damage roadways and hence should not pay for the continual re-pavement of streets. A street without cars is built once and lasts centuries. Road maintenance should come exclusively from an increased gas tax, because only motor vehicles, and especially trucks, cause wear and tear on roadways.

In my experience, people who buy bicycles at retail are extremely price-sensitive. The additional \$15 on a \$500 bicycle is just that much more discouragement from making a decision that, besides supporting local businesses, will lead to less pollution, less congestion, less healthcare costs, and less road maintenance costs, for all Oregonians.

An especially heavy source of roadway damage is studded tires, which according to ODOT cause \$8 million in damage annually on state highways alone. Studded tires should be taxed, not bicycles.

The amount that motorists pay should be proportional to the amount of driving they do. Therefore, the increases in title and sales taxes should be replaced by a larger gas tax increase. A gas tax is proportional to the use of the roadways and to the negative externalities of pollution and road wear, so it is the only tax that aligns incentives correctly to reduce emissions and congestion.

Finally, \$10 million annually for Safe Routes to School is not adequate. I would urge you to do the following:

- Remove the ten-year sunset on the program
- Expand street safety funding to \$15M per year
- Fund in-classroom education with \$6M per year
- Include Title 1 prioritization for street safety projects
- Create flexibility in local funding match requirement for Title 1 schools
- Expand the radius for eligible projects around schools to 1 mile

Thank you for your consideration!
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