

To the transportation committee, re HB 2017:

I am a lifelong Oregonian and a business owner in Portland. I'm writing today to share my deep concerns with the priorities shown in HB 2017.

Governor Brown has publicly committed to meeting aggressive climate goals, joining a coalition of states dedicated to sharply reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

If we're serious about meeting those goals, we need to begin now. Because transportation is responsible for such a large fraction of greenhouse gas emissions, any and all transportation spending must be made with these goals in mind.

But HB 2017 does the opposite: by pouring three quarters of a billion dollars into widening freeways in the Portland region, this bill doubles down on climate-destroying means of transportation. At almost 7 times the amount dedicated to improving bus service, it's clear that the authors of the bill believe that "congestion relief" in Portland is a bigger priority than dependable bus service statewide.

But the four freeway widening projects identified in the bill won't even deliver the "congestion relief" that is promised. Despite their very high cost, they won't add significant capacity, will cause large disruptions during construction, and any marginal gains in auto capacity will be quickly absorbed by induced demand.

Please remove these wrong-headed projects from the bill, and instead invest in strategies that will actually relieve congestion in the areas that need it most:

- Add or improve bus service, with dedicated lanes, providing a credible and reliable alternative to driving alone
- Quickly implement congestion pricing -- this is the only method that has been consistently shown worldwide to reduce congestion
- Allow people to safely & easily reach bus services: build safe sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and complete trail networks.

Any of these strategies will almost certainly produce a better return on investment than the freeway widening projects!

After years of disinvestment in our state, isn't it important that we make the smartest investments in our future? Drop misguided freeway expansions, and spend that money on projects with the highest return on investment and the best prospects for a livable low-carbon future.

Thanks,

Evan Heidtmann
CTO, Knock Software
NE Portland