

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose parts of the transportation bill HB 2017, specifically the allocation of over \$1 Billion to freeway mega projects. We do not want these freeway projects, we cannot afford these freeway projects, and these projects would not deliver the desired results.

I will leave aside arguments concerning crash deaths and injuries, death and ill-health from motor vehicle emissions, the health crisis of our sedentary lifestyles, the impact on our quality of life of filling our community with tarmac and motor vehicles, our destruction of our physical world and climate. It is apparent that most of our elected leaders are in denial of, or are ignoring, these aspects. Talk of Climate Change and Vision Zero may win a few votes, or ease a few consciences, but your actions, such as this bill, show your true priorities.

Instead, I will state: these projects will not work. Freeway widening does not provide "congestion relief". Any added capacity is quickly filled by induced demand. This has been shown time and again and is apparent to anyone who spends time actually researching the matters upon which you are deciding. The only way to reduce congestion is to find ways for people not to use their personal motor vehicles as much.

We cannot afford these freeways projects. We cannot even afford to maintain our currently existing, currently crumbling infrastructure. For example, the Portland Bureau of Transportation would need a ten-fold increase in its road maintenance budget for ten years just to catch up with deferred maintenance on roads. Yet we continue to pursue the most expensive possible option for transportation. Beyond transportation, to be spending a billion dollars on freeways in our state, instead of spending on public health, education and anti-poverty measures is bordering on the obscene.

There have been times in the past when our local leadership has resisted such short-sighted, self-centered, dead-end policies, and helped to create the more liveable conditions that we all enjoy today. I long for that type of leadership again. I urge you to amend HB 2017.

Jim Ashley-Walker  
Portland, OR 97206