

Dear Committee Members,

According to news reports, the “transportation package” appears to be in jeopardy.

I’d suggest that if you prefer **something to nothing**, delete about 99% of the amendments and simply raise the gas tax temporarily as a transition towards more useful finance mechanisms, such as mileage-based user fees and congestion pricing.

I think a plausible fix would be an immediate 10-12 cent/gallon increase in the motor fuel tax, lasting for the next four-to-six years, with no legislative earmarks on spending. We know how to administer such a tax, and we know it would be constitutionally dedicated to benefit road users. A six-year taxation period should be long enough to lay the groundwork for a better system that is fuel-neutral.

As a conciliatory measure to taxpayers, I’d also suggest you give “Connect Oregon” a proper burial. Nothing in that program is essential, and the entire conversation is a distraction.

I believe you were poorly advised to “go big or go home.” At this point, you should keep it very, very simple; a temporary gas tax increase is the easiest sell.

Sincerely,

John Charles
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