



DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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1036 SE Douglas Ave., Room 217 ↗ Roseburg, Oregon 97470

March 10, 2022

Oregon Transportation Commission

Attn: Chair Robert Van Brocklin

355 Capitol Street NE, MS #11

Salem, Oregon 97301

Submitted via electronic mail to: OTCAdmin@odot.state.or.us

Subject: Douglas County comments regarding Oregon Transportation Commission allocations of Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

Chair Van Brocklin, Vice-Chair Simpson, members of the Oregon Transportation Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comment on the Transportation Commission (OTC) allocations of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), H.R. 3684.

With over 32,000 road miles under county jurisdiction, and over 3,400 bridges, county governments manage, own, and maintain over 41 percent of Oregon's shared transportation system.

Douglas County asks you to support equitable distribution of funding across government partners and consider direct local government investments as you finalize plans for the \$1.2 billion in new state formula program funds, including \$412 million in flexible funding, awarded to Oregon through the IIJA over the next five years. County funding priorities include:

- Maintaining the cost-effective State Fund Exchange Program through Surface Transportation Block Grant funding;
- Allocating adequate local funding for the new \$268 million Bridge Formula Program, and \$32 million in new funding for the existing Local Bridge Program, that includes funding priorities for large on-system bridges, and maximizes the 100 percent federal funding for locally owned off-system rural bridges;
- Prioritizing local safety projects in the \$45 million in new investments for the All Road Transportation Safety program;
- Prioritizing local project funding for the \$94 million Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation Program; and
- \$82 million in Carbon Reduction Program funding, including 66 percent funding required to be allocated directly to local governments.

Keeping in line with the longstanding distribution for the State Highway Fund (50 percent state, 30 percent counties, 20 percent cities) that recognizes the importance of the partnership in managing our shared transportation systems and providing equitable funding for a cohesive approach to maintaining, preserving, and developing our road system, Douglas County implores the OTC to consider equitable distribution of funds reflective of this partnership.

Unfortunately, the current Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) proposal is not reflective of this partnership, and instead focuses narrowly on state programming. Local governments are helping the state reach its strategic transportation goals that support all communities across Oregon.

Direct federal funding to local governments not only supports needed operations and maintenance deficits, but also supports strategic priorities and local community priorities in the most flexible and efficient way.

Douglas County currently maintains a diverse network of local streets, arterials, and collectors that connect people and support our economy. This network includes 300 bridges and over 1,100 miles of urban streets, farm-to market roads, and county forest roads. This network provides access to many different urban and rural communities spread out over 5,000 square miles from the Pacific Ocean to the Cascade Mountains. It also serves as a crucial connection to nearly 2.8 million acres of commercial forest lands that is vital to local economies.

Investments in each of these key program areas mean a more connected, resilient Oregon transportation system.

Thank you again for your ongoing partnership. We look forward to working with the OTC, ODOT leadership, and our federal partners, as you consider investment of these critical resources.

Thank you,

DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Tim Freeman, Chair



Chris Boice



Tom Kress