



TINA KOTEK
GOVERNOR

November 7, 2025

The Honorable Tobias Read
Secretary of State
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: House Bill 3991

Dear Secretary Read,

I am signing House Bill 3991 today, which funds critical maintenance and operations for Oregon's roads, bridges, and transit agencies. This bill helps prevent cuts to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and communities across the state that would have posed a significant danger to Oregonians' safety and ability to get where they need to go. This bill helps us to keep state highways and local roads safe and open to traffic while preserving transit service and halting the pending layoffs of essential transportation staff. I am grateful to the legislature for stepping up to keep our state moving, alongside a broad coalition of cities, counties, workers, truckers, businesses, and the AAA.

House Bill 3991 maintains and supports state highways, local roads, and community public transportation. The average Oregon driver will pay about \$66 more annually in registration fees and gas taxes, or about \$5.50 per month for the following outcomes:

- **It will protect our state transportation system** by filling a \$300 million gap this biennium to maintain current services Oregonians rely on and prevent 500 of the people who provide those services from losing their jobs. These cuts would have compromised ODOT's ability to clear road incidents, plow snow during the winter, respond to emergencies like floods and wildfires, and keep state highways safe and open to traffic.
- **It will protect local communities in every part of Oregon** by filling a critical shortfall of city and county transportation funding so that they can keep their local roads and bridges safe and in working condition. This investment will allow local governments to invest in road projects that can facilitate housing and economic development.
- **It will protect people who rely on public transportation** by providing transit agencies a short-term resource that will help prevent service reductions for the next two years.

House Bill 3991 also modernizes how we pay for transportation in Oregon and increases fairness in who pays for our roads:

- Oregon will become the first state in the continental United States to require efficient vehicles that pay little or no gas tax to pay more of their fair share for the roads they use by having them pay by the mile they drive rather than the gallons of fossil fuels they burn. This will ensure that all vehicles pay to maintain, preserve, and improve our roads while providing future funding for transportation as we make the transportation system more sustainable.
- Oregon's complicated system of taxing trucks will be vastly simplified. Right now, truckers have to navigate 85 weight-mile tax rates. The bill consolidates that to just 10 rates plus the diesel tax paid by trucks, which is expected to reduce tax evasion. In addition, ensuring that passenger vehicles pay their fair share for the roads will eliminate an imbalance that has led to trucks shouldering a disproportionate burden for the last several years.

House Bill 3991 strengthens oversight and accountability for outcomes at ODOT:

- The Audits Division and Legislative Policy and Research Office will each undertake reviews of ODOT's performance and provide direction for improvements.
- A refocused Continuous Improvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) will provide greater accountability to ensure ODOT is delivering major projects on time and on budget. The CIAC will meet monthly to dig into major projects and report quarterly to the Oregon Transportation Commission and the Joint Committee on Transportation, allowing greater oversight.
- Local government requests that increase the cost and scope of projects will now be evaluated and approved by the Oregon Transportation Commission and reviewed by the Joint Committee on Transportation.
- The hiring and retention of the ODOT Director shifts from the Oregon Transportation Commission to the Governor.

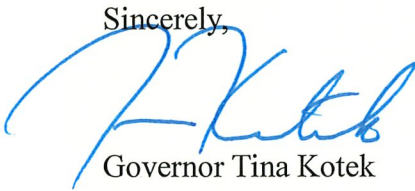
In addition, House Bill 3991 repeals the mandatory toll program established in House Bill 2017 from the 2017 legislative session.

Since the passage of the bill, ODOT has prioritized hiring maintenance staff for winter operations and DMV frontline staff to improve customer service. Dozens of maintenance workers have already been hired, with dozens more in the pipeline. With these hires, ODOT expects to be able to maintain the same level of service for winter operations as last year. DMV will also be able to reduce wait times and the number of unplanned office closures due to understaffing.

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The people who came together to solve this crisis do not always agree, but they all recognized the urgency of the situation. Oregon families were counting on us. Our economy was counting on us. Our communities were counting on us. When winter weather hits this year, Oregon families will be able to depend on road crews to help them get to where they need to go, businesses will be able to move their goods, and first responders will be able to get to emergencies.

Sincerely,



Governor Tina Kotek

TK:smg

cc: Speaker of the House Julie Fahey
Senate President Rob Wagner