



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

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March 22, 2018

Mr. Matthew Garrett, Director  
Oregon Department of Transportation  
355 Capitol St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Director Garrett:

I write to you regarding a budget note included in Oregon's 2017-19 Budget, HB 5045, that is related to the work the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has undertaken to implement the value pricing component of the 2017 transportation revenue package, HB 2017. As a member of the Value Pricing Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) that ODOT has established to assist in that work, I am in need of clarification on how that budget note has been interpreted.

If implemented today, the budget note in HB 5045 seems to imply that revenue from tolling anywhere on I-5 or I-205 could be directed to a single bottleneck relief project on I-205, specifically the Abernethy Bridge. That runs contrary to our understanding that value pricing under HB 2017 is to focus on congestion management and that those who pay the tolls will directly benefit. If the intent of the value pricing discussion is to focus on funding specific projects, there are nationally significant bottlenecks within the region that should be included in the conversation, such as an I-5 replacement bridge, and other potential improvements that would more directly benefit all users.

Given the information in the budget note, and the conversation that has been evolving through the PAC, our hope is that you may be able to provide more clarity. WSDOT's position has always been that those paying a toll, regardless of the state in which they live, must see direct benefits from that toll. Our recommendation would be that any tolling, regardless of location, should provide a direct benefit to the users paying the fee, which would include those north of the Columbia River.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kris Strickler".

Kris Strickler, P.E.  
WSDOT Southwest Regional Administrator

cc: Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle, City of Vancouver  
Clark County Councilor Eileen Quiring





# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Transportation

Office of the Director

355 Capitol St NE

Salem, OR 97301

March 23, 2018

Kris Strickler  
WSDOT – SW Region Administrator  
11018 NE 51<sup>st</sup> Circle  
Vancouver, WA 98682-6686

Dear Mr. Strickler,

Thank you for your letter about the budget note attached to ODOT's 2017-2019 budget in HB 5045. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify the purpose and effect of this legislative direction.

Budget notes are inserted into the legislatively approved budgets of Oregon state agencies to provide direction during the time period covered by the budget. This specific budget note provides direction to ODOT during the 2017-2019 biennium, which ends June 30, 2019.

In 2017 the Oregon Legislature considered funding for three major projects in the Portland metro region. Two of the three projects—I-5 at the Rose Quarter and OR 217—received funding in HB 2017, but the Legislature did not provide funding for the I-205 Stafford Road to Abernethy Bridge widening project, which we estimate will cost approximately \$500 million. In response, Sen. Richard Devlin, who at the time co-chaired the Joint Committee on Ways and Means but has since retired from the Legislature, inserted the budget note to ensure that ODOT continues to seek resources for congestion relief on I-205.

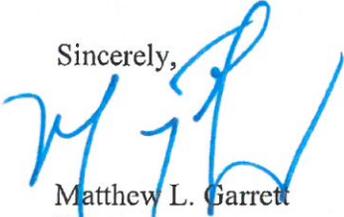
ODOT is implementing the budget note by seeking funding for the I-205 project from a variety of sources. In April ODOT will ask the Oregon Transportation Commission to consider adding \$15 million to the I-205 Stafford Road to Abernethy Bridge project budget to continue project development work. In addition, two of the five value pricing concepts presented to the Value Pricing Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) are specific to the I-205 Stafford Road to Abernethy Bridge segment: Concept D would create a new priced lane on this section of freeway, while concept E would price the I-205 Abernethy Bridge over the Willamette River to fund improvements.

Oregon law (Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 383 on Tollways) designates the Oregon Transportation Commission as the toll authority to establish tolls on state highways, set toll rates and determine where net revenue from tolls will be spent. Past the period of time covered by the budget note the Commission will set policy for where revenue from value pricing under HB 2017 should be directed.

Given the role of the PAC in advising the Commission, it would be appropriate and useful for the PAC to make recommendations to the Commission on where revenues from value pricing should be invested so the Commission can consider this input from stakeholders.

Please let me know if we can provide further clarity on this matter.

Sincerely,



Matthew L. Garrett  
Director