

September 13, 2022

The Honorable Kate Brown, Governor of Oregon  
900 Court Street, Suite 254  
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Cc: Interim Senate Committee on Rules and Executive Appointments

**Re: Oregon Transportation Commission Appointment Process and Nominee**

Dear Governor Brown,

Oregonians have time and time again demanded strong climate goals. To meet these, Oregon needs leaders who are visionary, climate-smart, and capable of and committed to taking our state's transportation system in a new direction. We need leaders connected to the needs of diverse communities across the state and who understand the power of these communities to effect change when they're meaningfully engaged.

Oregonians demand real transportation solutions. Transportation is our state's highest greenhouse gas emitter contributing to climate change and the second highest cost for households after housing. The stealth epidemic of traffic violence costs Oregonians lives and livelihoods. And an estimated one-third of Oregonians don't even drive.

Beyond our climate impact from transportation, Oregon's families, workers, and businesses deserve better. We demand access to a complete transportation system that is safe, reliable, affordable and accessible, and which helps us meet our economic goals.

We know you understand the need for transportation to evolve in the 21st Century. Your Executive Order 20-04 directed state agencies to reduce and regulate greenhouse gas emissions, including those from transportation.

Mindful of these considerations, we ask you to reconsider your current Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) appointment process and nominee.

**1) The OTC needs visionary, climate-smart, and diverse leadership in a time of crisis and change.**

Heat domes. Wildfires. Traffic fatalities. Congestion. Gentrification. Inflation. This is no time for business as usual. The OTC should be leading the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) into the future, with an unswerving commitment to equity, innovation, and inclusion, leaving behind the costly, deadly, unfair, fossil-fuel dependent systems of the past.

The OTC should also reflect the growing diversity of Oregon and the diversity of people who depend on transportation. Oregon's transportation future must be decided by people who represent more perspectives and more of Oregon's communities.

Even Oregon's historically highway-oriented ODOT is embracing the need to do business differently with its Strategic Action Plan, which prioritizes system modernization, racial equity, and sustainable funding.

*Visionary, climate-smart leadership is essential to achieve ODOT's strategy.*

## **2) Your current OTC appointment process fails Oregonians.**

The OTC is one of the most powerful unelected decision-making bodies in the state. Every appointment is critical and should be carefully considered, focused on the urgent need for leadership for change, and carried out transparently.

The process for making this appointment thus far has failed to meaningfully engage stakeholders and local jurisdictions, including those who have been effectively engaging with the OTC in the last few years, and undermines Oregon's ideals of open and transparent government.

*It is time not to double down on the past, but to look to the future with more inclusive, representative transportation decision-making.*

## **3) Representation matters.**

Replacing outgoing Commissioner Alando Simpson, a Black business owner from ODOT Region 1, with a white, retired legislator from Region 2 fails to ensure that the OTC is representative in as many ways as possible, including age, race, ethnicity, income, and geography. Over half Oregon's population resides in the Greater Portland Metro region and billions of dollars are planned for transportation investment in this area in the next decade.

This appointment continues the outdated legacy of appointing only people who regularly get around by private vehicle, ignoring representation of those who are locked out of that opportunity by disability or poverty. It fails to incorporate the concerns of youth and older adults about their own needs for transportation and for their future in an increasingly dire climate crisis.

At this moment, when Oregon is grappling not only with a rapidly escalating climate crisis and an increasingly deadly system, but also taking on enormous debt for large investments and finding new funding to pay for the system, we need new approaches and new ways of thinking. We need commissioners who look forward, who listen to the needs of more people, and who are ready to do the difficult work to reform the system and resolve key regional investments.

*The proposed appointment would make the OTC less diverse in every way, and would impede implementation of ODOT's strategic action plan.*

## **4) Pause the current OTC appointment process.**

Oregonians will not accept regressive investments in transportation any longer. It is time for the OTC to better represent Oregonians and our needs.

*We ask you to pause this process. Do not go forward with this rush appointment. Let the next administration make the decision.*

## **5) The OTC needs to be reformed.**

We are eager to see guidelines put in place to ensure that the process to appoint members to the OTC is more open and robust and to institute reforms to ensure the OTC is representative of and responsive to the needs of all Oregonians.

*We are in discussions with state legislators interested in seeing the OTC better represent and serve the interests of all Oregonians and the needs of the future.*

We are grateful for your consideration and welcome further conversation about this issue.

Signed,

**1000 Friends of Oregon**, Brett Morgan

**Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST)**, Rob Zako

**Climate Solutions**, Vee Paykar

**Oregon Environmental Council**, Sara Wright

**Oregon Just Transition Alliance**, Joel Iboa

**Oregon Walks**, Ashton Simpson

**Rogue Action Center**, Dana Greenblatt

**The Street Trust and The Street Trust Action Fund**, Sarah Iannarone

**Verde**, Vivian Satterfield

*Additional coalitions as of September 19, 2022:*

**Coalition of Communities of Color**, Taren Evans

**Getting There Together Coalition**, Ariadna Falcon Gonzalez

**Just Crossing Alliance**, Chris Smith

*Additional organizations and businesses as of September 19, 2022:*

**Ardelis Inc.**, Brian Roddy

**Bend Bikes**, LeeAnn O'Neill

**Bikabout**, Megan Ramey

**Bike Loud PDX**, Kiel Johnson

**Gorge Pedal**, Armando Zelada

**Lithic Technology**, Robert Galanakis

**Mt. Scott-Arleta Neighborhood Association**, Matchu Williams

**Onward Oregon**, Lenny Dee

**OPAL Environmental Justice**, Lee Helfend

**Oregon and SW Washington Families for Safe Streets**, Michelle DuBarry

**Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility**, David De La Torre

**Pedal Bike Tours**, Todd Roll

**Plugstart**, Thor Hinckley

**Portland: Neighbors Welcome**, Aaron Brown

**Portland Youth Climate Strike**, Adah Crandall

**Safe Routes to Schools**, Valerie Rosenberg

**Sunrise Beaverton**, Amy Johnson

**Sunrise PDX**, Danny Cage

**Sunrise Rural Oregon**, Cassie Wilson

*Additional individuals as of September 19, 2022:*

Akwai-Scott, Elliot	Bomber, Stephen	Churchill, Sam
Allen, Matt	Bowerman, Tom	Conachan, Gary
Arcana, Judith	Bray, Fred	Condron-Lee, Aaron
Augustine, Sarah	Buchanan, Paul	Cortright, Robert
Axthelm, Steve	Buck, Joe	Cowen, Anna
Baerg, Rye	Burns, David	Crum, Carol
Baker, Sarah	Butler, Nathan	Cushman, David
Barnhart, Brandon	Butler, Samuel	Dartnell, Camilla
Behnam, Rambod	Carlson, Priscilla	Davis, Mike
Bell, Greg	Carlton, Alex	De Anda-Hall, Alan
Berger, Joshua	Charton, Jenna	DeLuise, Michael
Biggs-Schoenfeld, Aron	Chavez-Downing, Alisha	Dreier, Ted
Blashchishen, Jack	Christensen, Katherine	Edelson, Noah
Boland, Shane	Christensen, Mary	Elmer, Stuart

Fallenstedt, Alexander	Horvat, Wendy	Love, Alan
Farbman, Max	Houston Goldsmith, Phil	MacKenzie, Iain
Farrell, Mike	Hughes, Richard	Mandel, Joel
Feldman, Virginia	Jaffee, Dan	Martin, John
Fithian-Barrett, Glenn	Jamieson, Whitaker	Martinez, Shawne
Foster, Sarah	Jaspers, Gwen	Martyn, Ryan
Fulton, Jerome	Jee, Vi	Mccarthy, Michelle
Garner, Julie	Johnston-smith, Lisa	McFarland, Teresa
Garnett, Carolyn	Jordan, Davida	McQuery, Elton
Goldsmith, Dell	kavalo, kerry	Meskill, Matthew
Goodwin, Karen	Kellett, Bob	Meyer, David
Goud, Blake	Kelly, Felice	Meyer, Jane
Goworowska, Justyna	Kelly, Kenneth	Midson, Kathryn
Green, David	Kelso, Jim	Miller, Randolph
Gross, Mara	King, Mary	Mojgani, Anis
Hamelman, Jennifer	Klotz, Doug	Morrissey, Matthew
Hanchrow, Marsha	LaBuda, Denise	Morton, Kateri
Hart, Anders	Laciano, Peter	Mosier, Ryan
Hashimawari, Jane	Ladewig, Michael	Muller, David
Hayden, Gabriele	Lanford, James	Murdoff, Jackie
Hayden, Jeremiah	Leshner, Zachary	Murray, Keenan
Henderson, Dana	Leverette, Adrienne	Nafziger, Marjorie
Hetrick, Josh	Lewis, David	Newell, Megan
Hill, Colin	Liao, Karen	Ngo, Thomas
Hinkle, Jonathan	Lieuallen, Scott	Norman, Phillip
Hixon, Maia	Linden, Josh	North, Symeon
Holmes, Tom	Linehan, Mark	O'Brien, Kathleen
Horvat, Sabi	Lolich, Erin	Oldham, Andrew

Parks, Marc	Statz, Joel
Patton, Greg	Stude, Ian
Perham, Mike	Susuras, Caleb
Perrin, Shela	Swofford, Ryan
Perry, Nicole	Tavolara, Madison
Piercy, Steve	Taylor, Gregory C
Platt, Emily	Teater, Kevin
Poodry, Frances	Townsend, Charles
Ramani, Hami	Tucker, Matthew
Ray, Rick	Van Deusen, Charles
Ricks, Tina	Vlach, Claire
Rioux, Michael	Ward, Evan
Rosen, Michael	Welton, David
Rosser, Douglas	Westendorf, Nic
Rothwell, Paxton	Westling, Michael
Salzberg, Ben	Wilhelm, Eric
Sanchez, Isabel	Williams, Angelica
Schaper, Holle	Wilson, Daniel
Schaper, Kevin	Wolling, Susan
Schlesinger, Dan	Wood, Jon
Schramm, Jenifer	Woodsong, Garlynn
Scott, Mary	Wright, Lisa
Setniker, Marcy	Wyrick, Cathy
Shaffer, Chris	Yerke, Sam
Sheperd, Richard	
Sipin, Maria	
Spurlock, Robert	
Starkey, Jennifer	