

Oregon lawmakers praise governor's move to cancel tolling projects

by KATU Staff

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Multiple Oregon lawmakers voiced support Tuesday for limiting tolling in the state after Gov. Tina Kotek canceled tolling projects for interstates 5 and 205 on Monday.

State Reps. Annessa Hartman, Courtney Neron and Jules Walters -- all Democrats who represent people in areas that could have seen tolling -- put out a statement praising the governor's action. They said they want the public to be part of transportation planning.

"Our communities did not support shouldering an outsized burden for interstate infrastructure, and this tolling reversal means a lot to those who live and work here," they wrote in a joint news release.

Funding for the roads does have to come from somewhere, though. The representatives said they will work in 2025 to identify equitable solutions to that issue.

Meanwhile, the project for tolling on the Interstate Bridge over the Columbia River is set to continue. That project was not included in Kotek's order.

Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith said Tuesday that the county has been opposed to the tolling projects since they were first introduced.

"Clackamas County has been singled out for tolling where no other jurisdiction has," she said. "And we fought that, and we fought that, and we fought that with common sense solutions. Our citizens were in an uproar. Our cities were in an uproar and being the county government, we answer the citizens' concerns."