



HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

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House Democrats Challenge Republicans Requesting Emergency Funding for ODOT

Less than a week after a Republican-backed campaign to pull critical ODOT funding, three Republicans are asking for emergency funding for the agency

SALEM, Ore. — After more than a week of historic flooding, Representative Mark Owens (R-Crane), Senator Mike McLane (R-Powell Butte), and Representative Vikki Breese-Iverson (R-Prineville) requested emergency funding to maintain roads during the winter. This comes less than a week after their colleagues turned in signatures to strip funding for the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and after all three members of the legislature voted against a comprehensive transportation package back in September 2025.

House Democrats React

Rep. Susan McLain (D-Hillsboro)

“My Republican colleagues’ request is as impractical as it is unsustainable. Are they going to ask for emergency funds for the rest of 2026 as well when they strip funding as part of their ballot measure to defund ODOT? It is simply not realistic.”

Rep. Dacia Grayber (D-SW Portland & E Beaverton)

“In the last week, we’ve seen historic flooding and unpredictable weather in both Oregon and Washington. Every day it becomes clearer that the decision to fund ODOT is literally one of life or death. This is about the survival of whole communities, let alone individuals. Oregonians love our wild weather and gorgeous geography, but to live here means we need reliable transportation infrastructure and service, and I’m heartened that my fellow Republicans agree. Funding emergencies one at a time is not smart or sustainable. Unfortunately, because of funds stripped away by the Trump administration, we can’t just pull down dollars— which is why House Democrats passed legislation to avoid this problem back in September.”

Rep. Travis Nelson (N & NE Portland)

“It’s rich to see Republicans suddenly discover that safe roads require money. The very lawmakers now urging ODOT to seek emergency funding were happy to support referring stable transportation funding to the ballot, putting road maintenance on ice for years. Praising ODOT crews while starving the agency of resources doesn’t fix potholes, guardrails, or landslides created by the recent storms. We will need money to repair roads. That’s just how it works.”

Rep. David Gomberg (D-Otis)

“The landslide that cut off the Siletz community is exactly the kind of emergency ODOT is supposed to be funded to respond to. While I’m relieved no one was hurt and grateful to ODOT crews for acting quickly, the reality is that putting ODOT funding on hold leaves the agency without the resources to deal with disasters of this scale—forcing communities to wait and lawmakers to scramble for one-off fixes instead of investing in a stable, bipartisan solution.”

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