

State Representative  
Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer)



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***Toll Report Gets Mixed Reviews From Rep Thatcher***

(Salem) "While this [new report](#) on the Newberg-Dundee Bypass project gives us a lot of useful information about tolling, I wish it would have explored other funding options more extensively." That was the reaction from State Representative Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer) today after attending the monthly meeting of the [Oregon Transportation Commission](#) (OTC) in Portland.

The Commission was presented with a 168 page report from the [Oregon Transportation Improvement Group](#) (OTIG) which was contracted to look at the feasibility of the Newberg-Dundee Bypass through Yamhill County crossing over Thatcher's legislative district. The so called "Milestone 1" report "examines tolling as a primary source of funding and discusses various tolling options" (page 6).

Representative Thatcher explained, "we know the only way a project of this magnitude can become reality is through a [public-private partnership](#). I am not opposed to tolling, but I don't think it needs to be the only source of funding. The new information we learned today gives us a number of tolling options but didn't do a very in depth analysis of other revenue."

OTIG is comprised of several private sector companies and headed by [Macquarie Infrastructure Group](#), which is an international leader in constructing toll roads. "Given the source, I'm not surprised that the focus of the report was on toll roads," noted Thatcher.

Thatcher has been working with other local leaders on a number of issues related to the Newberg-Dundee bypass. A year ago she tried to secure [additional federal dollars](#) for the project and has worked hard to [ensure fairness for residents in Yamhill County](#).

Dozens of other states have public-private partnerships to construct new roads using tolls and other financing mechanisms. "My main concern is imposing tolls on the Highway 99 W for local residents," said Thatcher. A new [national AAA report](#) out last week showed Americans are willing to pay tolls to build new roads but 2/3rds of them do not want tolls on existing roads.

"I'm frustrated because we need more time to investigate funding alternatives," added Thatcher. "However, you know what they say? Time is money and the longer we wait to build this bypass the more expensive it becomes." The [11 mile long road](#) is designed to divert traffic off 99W from Rex Hill to the Highway 18 intersection.

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