



**Testimony for Senate Transportation Committee  
March 26, 2015**

**Support for HB1173: Winter Driving I-70 Tread Depth & Tire Chains**

Good morning Senate Transportation Committee Members. My name is Margaret Bowes, Program Manager for the I-70 Coalition. The I-70 Coalition is a non-profit organization representing 28 local governments and businesses along and adjacent to the I-70 mountain corridor. Our mission is to enhance public accessibility and mobility in the I-70 mountain corridor through the implementation of joint public and private transportation management efforts.

Weekend congestion is a well-known factor on the I-70 corridor. We can give the traveling public fairly adequate delay projections based on historic data that gives them some travel reliability, but just a single accidents can lead to blocked lanes, highway closures and extensive, unexpected delays. A single vehicle that loses traction on the Eisenhower Tunnel approach can close a lane or the entire highway. This scenario can turn a typically slow Sunday afternoon eastbound drive to one that results in 8 hour delays like we saw on February 9, 2014. On that date, CDOT's Courtesy Patrol program relocated 22 vehicles on eastbound I-70 between Silverthorne and Eisenhower Tunnel. Of the 22 vehicles, 19 had bald tires. Our organization believes HB1173 will positively impact travel on the I-70 corridor by reducing accidents and as a result reduce road closures and extensive delays.

Traveler education and outreach is a large focus area for the I-70 Coalition, and we see great value in the education component of this bill. My organization frequently hears from I-70 travelers that they aren't clear on what "adequate equipment" means and often times have no idea that a chain law for passenger vehicles exists. And among those that know about the passenger vehicle chain law, many find the law unclear. The fact that this bill clarifies the existing chain law is valuable in itself. Adding specific mile markers further highlights the need for adequate traction when traveling through the mountains.

In conclusion, the I-70 mountain corridor has proven to be a very sensitive one, and any actions that can improve mobility for our mountain residents and visitors is worthwhile. We believe HB 15-1173 will have a positive impact on mobility on the I-70 corridor by reducing accidents and closures, and will facilitate much needed public education around the need for adequate equipment when traveling through the mountains.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Margaret Bowes".

Margaret Bowes, Program Manager, I-70 Coalition