



To:

Joint Committee on Transportation
jct.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

May 10, 2019

Dear Co-Chair Beyer, Co-Chair McKeown, Co-Vice Chair Boquist, Co-Vice Chair Noble, and Members of the Joint Transportation Committee,

My name is Jairaj Singh, I live in the Rhine Street apartments off of the corner of SE Powell and 82nd Avenue, and I urge you to support HB 2846, the Safe Community Highways Act.

Through the passage of this Act, local communities can correctly prioritize the safety and maintenance needs of these important roadways. As someone who walks to work almost everyday along SE 82nd Avenue, an ODOT maintained state highway, it is obvious that vehicles are given priority over pedestrians. It is unsafe for pedestrians to walk down SE 82nd Avenue and I have had close encounters with vehicles when crossing the street. Sidewalks are narrow with minimal barriers between vehicles and pedestrians. We need to allow communities to decide how these neglected and dangerous community highways are maintained and designed.

An integral part of a thriving community is safe, accessible streets and sidewalks. Existing state highways that act like city streets or county roads are not being prioritized for maintenance and are neglected. If we are to achieve true climate resiliency and encourage people to take alternatives to single occupancy vehicles, we need to transfer these highways to local jurisdictions, where local planners know how to tailor streets to neighborhoods and their residents. This legislation solves the problem of individual communities legislating for jurisdictional transfer on their own. This Act allows all communities in Oregon with candidate highways to work together to develop strategies for jurisdictional transfer. There have been several pedestrian deaths and injuries over the past decade along the route I walk along SE 82nd Avenue in Portland, and this is most likely common along many state highways.

This is why I support HB 2846, and I encourage this Committee to pass it. Please remember my story when voting on this bill. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jairaj Singh
Community Outreach Manager
APANO