

Dear Senator Prozanski:

I'm a civilian retiree of Gresham Police Department, and a senior citizen who increasingly must rely on public transportation. I remember when police officers were encouraged to ride the light rail, and could ride free by showing their badges. It was a safety measure for the light rail, easy on the officer who was going into Portland to testify in court or consult with a DA on one of their cases. It was expedient for everyone. That was then, this is now... the "now" when hate crimes are on the rise nationwide.

Fare Inspector jobs can be incredibly dangerous because they deal with lawbreakers. Fare inspectors are assaulted weekly. The Transit Police are the only ones who have their backs when they need help.

With this kind of threat, I can't imagine how it will be when the public learns HB 4097 will stop the police from being near them for protection.

Fare Inspectors need all the tools they can get to make our transit systems safe, and having a police officer on board would help them in dangerous situations. It should calm matters. People are less likely to assault a Fare Inspector when police are nearby.

Transit riders are more than worried. They're scared. In the wake of the Jeremy Christian case, can you blame them? It is a daily reminder on local and national news that bad things can happen. When the public learns this bill will prevent transit police from being present with fare inspectors, I know it means fewer people will ride transit. They don't feel safe now. Removing police will make this worse!

Please stop HB 4097.

Sincerely

*Pamela Asbury-Smith*