

This bill is not just about transportation, it is about saving lives. I have lived in Portland for 18 years now, and one of the major reasons that I moved here was bike and pedestrian safety being a priority. As the region has grown in population and in development, bicycle and pedestrian access have NOT been given their fair share. More cars are on the roads and more drivers are driving more dangerously. Every day on my commute I encounter dangerous driving habits, whether it is the 6-mile bike ride to work at OHSU, or a short walk to the small grocery 3 blocks away. Increasing safe routes for bicycles and pedestrians needs to be prioritized because cars have been prioritized for so long, they do not think that they need to consider other road users at all. Many people who have moved here in recent years do not feel safe biking around the Portland area at all. Given what we know about climate change, there is no reason to continue to put single-occupancy motor vehicles first in our transportation planning: let me reiterate - NO REASON. It should be difficult, unpleasant and expensive to drive a private motor vehicle. It should be safe, easy, and cheap to ride a bicycle, walk the streets and use public transportation. Prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian safety will make it easier and safer for people of all lived experiences and backgrounds to choose to cycle or walk more often. More people making those choices to use sustainable transportation will in turn encourage others. The opposite is also true - if we keep prioritizing single-occupancy motor vehicles, more people will continue to choose that form of transportation. People died in Texas last month because of climate change. People have been dying all over the world for over a decade because of disasters caused by climate change. People are dying on the streets of Portland because we continue to prioritize single-occupancy motor vehicles over the bodies of pedestrians and cyclists. Changing the world to a safer place will take all of us making difficult and sometimes unpopular decisions in many realms of our lives. The people who have the power to make this decision need to make the one that will save lives.