



**DATE:** March 4, 2021

**TO:** Co-Chairs McLain and Beyer, Joint Committee on Transportation

**FROM:** Sarah Iannarone, Executive Director, The Street Trust

**RE:** Senate Bill 395, "Safe Routes for All"

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Co-Chairs McLain and Beyer, Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

Good morning, my name is Sarah Iannarone and I am here on behalf of The Street Trust which represents thirty years of sustained commitment to transportation advocacy and thousands of members across Oregon. Today, we submit the following testimony in support of Senate Bill 395 as sponsored by Senator Floyd Prozanski at the request of our organization.

We want to begin by recognizing that this has been a very hard year for Oregonians and that this is a tough legislative session for lawmakers as you struggle to make budgetary ends meet on our behalf. Fortunately, I'm here to bring you a bright spot in these dark days - a revenue-neutral proposal in celebration of Oregon's historic legislation - Happy 50th Birthday Bike Bill!

Half a century ago, Oregon Governor Tom McCall signed into law the Bike Bill that - along with the Beach and Bottle bills - would position us as a global leader in environmental sustainability. Led by a cycle-loving Republican from Southern Oregon, Rep. Don Stathos, the Bike Bill was groundbreaking in mandating that a percentage of state highway funds spent on road improvement projects be dedicated to improving conditions for people walking and cycling. The bill also created the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (OBPAC) to award grants for the design and construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The Bike Bill contributed to many successes. Thousands of Oregon residents in communities around the state commute by bike. Cumulatively, Oregon has the highest bicycle commuting to work rate in the nation. These trips lighten the load on streets and highways where there is traffic congestion and avoid thousands of tons of greenhouse gas and particulate emissions.

Cycling tourism contributes \$400 million a year to the state's economy. Cycling manufacturing and services contribute to our exports and to the vitality of local communities. Transportation consulting firms headquartered in Oregon regularly secure out-of-state work on the basis of Oregon's reputation for leading active transportation planning and implementation.

Thanks in part to investments through the Bike Bill, cycling and walking in Oregon is safer than in many other states and yet, as you will tragically hear from some of our supporters today, too many Oregonians' transportation choices, livelihoods - and even their lives - are curtailed because of unsafe conditions.

On this 50-year anniversary of the passage of this landmark legislation, The Street Trust is excited to be working in coalition with advocacy partners from around the state including Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST), Bike Loud PDX, Commute Options in Bend, Oregon Trails Coalition, and many more here today working together to support healthy and thriving communities through investments in safe, sustainable, equitable transportation options.

Although much has changed in the last fifty years, the original Bike Bill's vision of safe, connected routes across Oregon has not.

And neither has that 1% project share we ensconced in the Bike Bill fifty years ago.

While the Bike Bill has provided 50 years of investment in facilities, not a single community in Oregon can boast a complete bike and pedestrian network. These conditions make it dangerous for people who do not have access to a car, saddle households with the expense of car ownership, deprive young people and people with disabilities of independent mobility and physical activity, and increase particulate pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

As we recover from COVID, we need a renewed effort to provide Oregonians with the transportation choices they need. It will be easy for naysayers to say we should be having a different conversation, save it for another session, or future transportation package. I am here today to urge you to act. We are decades away from achieving the walking and biking goals in the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan because of inaction.

At current funding levels, the Oregon Department of Transportation calculates it will take over 150 years to achieve the vision of the original Bike Bill. We urge legislators to act now for the future of our state. SB 395 will provide clear benefits for people across Oregon by contributing to a swift COVID recovery while helping us meet our climate action and equity goals. These investments support local jobs and our economy by creating a comprehensive transportation network that provides for the needs of all people. Additionally, research has shown that cycling

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and walking projects tend to create more jobs per dollar spent because they are typically more labor-intensive and more reliant on drawing from the local economy when compared to road projects.

Now is the time for Oregon to realize our vision of safe walkways, bikeways, and street crossings so that all of us can move safely around our communities and the state. If the last fifty years have taught us anything, it's that a bold vision is necessary, but insufficient: we must continue to secure the resources for improvements in biking and walking accessibility across the state. We recognize that you are balancing many competing interests for those funds and that is why our advocacy coalition is pushing to make walking and biking a practical priority.

This is a time to act. This is a time to update the Bike Bill for the 21st Century and truly create **Safe Routes For All** by enacting Senate Bill 395.

Thank you,



Executive Director  
The Street Trust

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**Supporting SB 395 means you support:**

**Our Vulnerable Populations:** Investments in safe ways to walk and roll, provide equitable access for vulnerable populations, including those who rely on public transit; children traveling to school; and older Oregonians and people with disabilities:

**Our Economy:** Cycling is a driver of economy development across the state, contributing \$1.5 billion to our state economy. Safe walking routes connect consumers to local businesses, helping communities thrive. Walking and biking reduces traffic congestion, making our businesses more competitive in a global economy, and nearby neighborhoods safer and more desirable

**Our Health:** Walking and biking provide physical activity, supporting healthy communities and reducing the risk of heart disease, strokes, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer. It also supports cleaner air, as 40-50% of air pollutants in Oregon come from vehicle exhaust

**Our Safety:** The Bike Bill was inspired by recognition that bikers and walkers are uniquely vulnerable in crashes compared to vehicles. We need to ensure all Oregonians can use our roads safely.

**Our Environment:** Transportation is the largest source of climate pollution in Oregon. Walking and biking reduce use of motor vehicles for short trips, helping us reduce air pollution and greenhouse emissions.

**Our Natural Beauty:** For many, Oregon is defined by its beautiful natural spaces and our ability to enjoy and access them across the state. Investing in our walking and biking network supports recreation across the state