



**Testimony Before the Joint Committee on Transportation
Relating to SB 395**

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Submitted by Jim McCauley, Legislative Director - League of Oregon Cities

Co-Chairs Senator Beyer and Representative McLain, Co-Vice Chairs Senator Boquist and Representative Noble. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input today. I am offering the LOC's opposition to SB 395.

I think its important to point out that our opposition has nothing to do with the advocacy for increased investment in pedestrian and bike facilities. These are part of a larger comprehensive transportation infrastructure investment that remains important for the League and our member cities as we continue to support efforts for all modes of transportation investments.

The objection we have with SB 395 is that HB 2017 has yet to be fully implemented. When the bill was passed in 2017 it had an effective 7-year phase-in to create the revenue streams necessary to cover the estimated \$5.3 billion comprehensive, multi-model transportation infrastructure investment. The 1% allocation investment for bike and pedestrian facility improvements was part of the negotiation that LOC along with a long list of other organizations accepted.

At a minimum the League's Transportation Policy Committee had the same perspective in 2017 as it does today. When LOC agrees to a transportation package the expectation is that the agreements last for at least the full implementation of the revenue roll-out. The proposed shift from 1%-5% may not seem like much of a change, but I suggest it is significant and I suspect if cities or counties were to ask for a similar adjustment in the formulated distribution of State Highway Funds it would be met by similar objections that we are offering today.

The State Highway Fund is already tracking less revenue generation largely a result of the pandemic, which means projects are being adjusted, and spending options are being reduced. Part of the value of the State Highway Fund is that cities and counties get to make their own decisions and determine what makes sense for their own transportation priorities. Cities for example could take the entirety of their respective share of State Highway Funds and drop it into bike-ped facilities, but again that decision making rests within their own priority setting process.

I think the best course forward with increased bike and pedestrian improvements rests with each city for now, but we do need to consider this scale of investment. The next transportation package is not that far into the future. HB 2017 completed a conversation that started almost three years earlier and involved two state-wide conversations, multiple meetings across Oregon and for those of us during the 2017 session 3-4 weekly meetings to make sure the months of time and energy we put into a package would actually get the votes and be implemented and be of such a transformative scale as you would hope with a \$5.3 billion package.

Let's make sure those commitments made in 2017 stick and take on the vision for more bike and pedestrian investments during the next transportation package.