

HB 2662 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Transportation

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Oregon Department of Transportation to collaborate with TriMet and Portland & Western Railroad to study issues related to extending the Westside Express Service commuter rail line to Salem. Requires Department to report findings to interim committees related to transportation by September 15, 2024. Appropriates \$500,000 from General Fund to Department to conduct study. Sunsets January 2, 2025. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2023.

NOTE - Speaker has requested that JCT add referral to Committee on Ways and Means

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

TriMet is Oregon's largest provider of public transportation services, operating over 80 bus lines, five light rail lines, paratransit services, and one commuter rail line. The Westside Express Service (WES) was inaugurated in February 2009, connecting the Beaverton Transit Center to the Wilsonville Transit Center. The WES operates on freight tracks owned by the Portland & Western Railroad, and makes 10 trips north and south each weekday, roughly every 45 minutes. The WES service includes three intermediate stops and provides connections to the South Metro Area Regional Transit (SMART) system in Wilsonville, the Yamhill County Transit Area system in Tigard, and Salem-Keizer Area Mass Transit District, also known as Cherriots, via express bus from Wilsonville to Salem.

House Bill 2662 directs the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to conduct a study of the issues related to extending the WES commuter rail line south to Salem. The study is to consider the feasibility of using the defunct Oregon Electric Railway corridor, and requires consulting cities that could be served by the service extension.