



**Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Julie Fitzgerald Supporting HB 2662:**

***Legislation Provides Opportunity to Improve I-5 Commuting Between Portland Metro Area–North Willamette Valley With Reliable High-Capacity Transit Option***

Scheduled for public hearing on Feb. 21, 2023, before  
the Joint Committee On Transportation

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Vice-Chairs Boquist and Boshart Davis, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in strong support of HB 2662, which sponsors an ODOT study of extending TriMet’s WES commuter train from Wilsonville to Salem, with stops in Donald, Woodburn and Keizer — growing communities aspiring to improve transportation options.

The City of Wilsonville operates the South Metro Area Regional Transit (SMART) agency, which collaborates with the Salem Area Mass Transit District to share the Monday through Friday commuter “1X Express” bus route on I-5 between Wilsonville and Salem. SMART buses also meet each WES train to provide the last-mile connection to employers.

**As traffic congestion on the South Portland Metro and North Willamette Valley I-5 corridor continues to worsen**, commuters, shoppers and those with medical appointments would welcome a public-transit alternative unaffected by ever increasing highway traffic congestion. **As a commuter train, WES is unimpeded by highway traffic congestion**, offering the potential for a reliable transportation option that connects to major metro areas.

As ODOT undertakes the I-205 Toll Project and Regional Mobility Pricing Project (RMPP) for tolling all of I-5 and I-205 in the Portland metro region, equity issues of impacts to low-income populations of tolls to North Willamette Valley commuters are of concern. **The lack of sufficient reliable, public-transit commute options along I-5 from Salem/Keizer to Portland area makes a non-highway mobility option more attractive.**

The City understands that both the WES study and potential extension provide the state an opportunity to leverage federal transit funds for commuter service connecting Portland METRO and Salem-Keizer SKATS—two Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) Transportation Management Areas (TMAs)—and that can increase WES ridership.

The City appreciates your consideration and urges a Do-Pass vote on HB 2662. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Julie Fitzgerald'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Fitzgerald, Mayor  
City of Wilsonville