

I am writing in support of HB 3014

I am somewhat new to Portland (moved here almost 2 years ago). I relocated my family here from Georgia. During our almost 2 years living in Portland one of the most memorable and life changing experiences we have had has been in the form of the Alameda Elementary School Bike Bus program which is managed by Coach Balto. My daughter attends Alameda Elementary and we started riding with the bike bus last year when she was in Kindergarten. We live within a mile of the school so are not eligible for school bus transportation. Bike bus has given my daughter the opportunity to socialize, exercise and be part of something bigger each and every Wednesday. This experience with alternative transportation has changed our experience with the school for the better. Each and every Wednesday (rain, shine or even a bit of snow) myself and my daughter ride to school with the other students, parents, principal and teachers who participate. Along the route my daughter rides up to her friends to say hi and waves at friends as we pass their houses on the route. She has met new friends through the program and every Wednesday is amazingly excited for "bike bus day". She has learned to ride her bike amazingly well and learned essential bike commuting safety skills. Bike bus for us has expanded into other days where we ride to school just her and I. Bike bus has given us motivation to continue pursuing cycling as an alternate form of transportation. I personally have struggled with weight gain since the start of the Covid pandemic/lockdowns. Bike bus has motivated me to get exercising as well. I have lost weight and been feeling more confident and healthier all due to the weekly motivation of bike bus! Opening funding more transportation options like bike bus would benefit all students and parents state wide. Every week we get numerous texts and calls from the district regarding bus route cancellations due to the shortage of bus drivers. HS 3014 will not only assist with this but allow other students and parents with similar experiences as I have had with my daughter through bike bus.

Sincerely,

Justin Ward