



Commissioner Mingus Mapps
City of Portland

February 21, 2023

Re: HB 3014

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Hudson and Wright, and members of the House Committee on Education,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 3014. The City of Portland supports this bill because it allows school districts greater flexibility to meet students' transportation needs while supporting children getting around our communities safely, conveniently, and efficiently.

The City's Safe Routes to School program works with over 100 schools across five districts. Our programs work with district partners to support students with safe transportation every day. With over a decade of experience working with school districts, we recognize that rules governing school transportation funding and approved costs limit Portland's school districts' flexibility to meet unforeseen challenges and provide the transportation options that students need to access education.

This bill will support a number of positive outcomes for schools in Portland:

- **Increase safety for student traveling on our system each day to school.** Traffic crashes are the second leading cause of death in Oregon for children ages 5-17. As a Vision Zero city we know that keeping kids safe will require transforming our streets with improved infrastructure. We know this will take time, and flexibility to provide safe solutions and support for student transportation could save lives.
- **Relieve pressure on the bus system by reducing demand** in areas where students are closer to school, and prioritizing students with greatest need.
- **Increase student success.** Chronic absenteeism is one of the leading causes of low high school graduation rates, which disproportionately affects students of color in our community. Transportation is a key barrier to student attendance and one that we have the tools to address together.
- **Alleviate congestion and reduce emissions** by providing families with more school-supported less-polluting transportation services, supporting statewide and local goals for reduction in emissions.
- **Provide programming to ensure trusted adults are supporting student safety** while walking and rolling. Getting to school by active transportation also leads to improved student health, learning, and attendance.
- **Expand impact of available funding.** When school districts can partner directly with existing efforts to improve transportation infrastructure and deliver SRTS programs, our shared investments will be more effective in meeting student needs and improving safety.



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The City of Portland Safe Routes to School program is committed to supporting our local school districts and families to ensure kids get to school safely every day. We appreciate the discussion and involvement of this committee and the legislature in working to address student's health and safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony in support of students and families across Portland.

Sincerely,

Mingus Mapps, Commissioner
City of Portland
Bureau of Transportation