

Submitter: Spring Bartlett
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: SB14

In 2020 I initiated a petition in support of reinstating the Pioneer Line from Portland to Salt Lake, stopping in Baker City. We gathered 322 signatures, then got The City of Halfway to pass a resolution of support. We were on the agenda of the Baker County Commission meeting when Covid hit and we got bumped off. In 2022 we decided to drop the plan to engage Baker City folks to jointly submit petitions for the support of the Commission before sending it off to all State Representatives and Senators. We mailed them off in early 2022. In The fall of 2022, organized as 'Panhandle for Passenger Rail' we encouraged people to write to all eligible entities to ask them to submit Letters of Interest to the Federal Corridor Identification and Development Program.

This is my personal testimony presented at the City of Halfway council meeting in February of 2020:

When the train ran from Baker City to Portland in the 80's my family took it to spend Thanksgiving with my sister-in-law and her family who lived in Vancouver, Washington. That year the Columbia River Gorge was treacherous with ice and freezing rain. We would not have been able to go but for the train. I had two young daughters at the time and they had an adventure they remember to this day. If the service were reinstated I would probably go to Portland for cultural experiences. Now, I rarely make the trip because I find it too stressful to drive in heavy urban traffic. My anxiety has increased along with the number of people texting and driving.

I don't fly as much these days as I have in the past, but it would be great to hop on a train to Boise and not have to worry about parking my car if I were to catch a plane. Better yet, if the rail service went to Salt Lake City I would be able to make connections and not have to fly at all. I like the idea of making a lighter carbon footprint and believe that the reinstatement of passenger rail service to rural communities is an idea whose time has come.

Also, I have two grandchildren who live in Mancos, Colorado, a grueling two-day drive. I would much prefer to take the train to Salt Lake City and a bus from there, perhaps. One can dream of a day when they have the option to come visit Nana by train.

Thank-you for considering my testimony.