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Testimony on SB 14 February 28, 2023

For the record I am Luis Moscoso, Government Affairs Director for All Aboard Washington (AAWA) and the Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates (AORTA) here today in support of HB 2692. I am a former Legislator in Washington state where I served as Vice Chair of the House Transportation Committee and founded the Legislative Rail Caucus in 2013.

I can hardly express my excitement about this bill which will study options for restoring passenger rail service between Portland and Ontario. As everyone should know by now, this corridor is part of the Pioneer line which served communities from Seattle to Denver until 1997. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has now selected this route for further evaluation and support under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

My employers, AORTA in Oregon and AAWA in Washington state, enthusiastically support this bill and are now part of the Pioneer Coalition Working Group consisting of rail advocates from OR, WA, ID, UT, WY and CO that will advise the FRA Pioneer study now underway. Advocacy work we have been involved with for several years in the NW has gained a lot of interest as word gets out about restoring service on this corridor.

Passage of SB 14 would show the FRA, Amtrak, elected officials and, most importantly communities on the Pioneer line, that the State of Oregon is serious and committed to restoring service in this corridor. The ODOT study report, when concluded, will help make the case for Amtrak long distance service along the former Pioneer line between Seattle and Denver which will lessen the state of Oregon's expenditure for in-state passenger service and operation when approved.

This is really a no-brainer when it comes to seeing the advantages of studying Oregon's section of a corridor Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration are already interested in. I wholeheartedly recommend passage of SB 14 to help Oregon continue to build a statewide transportation system that connects Oregonians and interstate passengers who are looking for a cleaner and more efficient way to travel.

Luis Moscoso, Government Affairs Director

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