

April 6, 2023

Written Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Transportation in regards to HB 3113

Submitted by Sarah M Risser, 3503 SW Gale Ave, Portland OR 97239

To my elected representatives –

I am a new resident to the state of Oregon and the city of Portland. I am so happy to be here. I moved from the upper Midwest, drawn in large part by the Oregon's natural beauty. However, my experience is compromised by road safety issues. I believe Oregon is under potential. More needs to be done to ensure safety and access to alternate, active and public transport options.

I believe that it is imperative – not only to address the public health crisis of road fatalities and serious injuries but also to address a very real and dire climate crisis – that we direct as many resources as possible to alternate and active transportation systems. Giving people safe and viable alternatives to driving private vehicles is the most efficient way to get cars off the road and by doing so increase road safety and reduce emissions.

According to NHTSA data, Oregon had the 10th highest traffic fatality rate in the U.S. in the last half of 2022. Pedestrian fatalities in Oregon were up 61% percent over the previous year in that time period and these conditions disproportionately affect BIPOC Oregonians and people living on low-incomes. With \$100 million in funding via HB 3113, we can reduce the number of serious injuries and deaths on our most dangerous Orphan Highways while strategically investing in safe and profitable main streets across Oregon. Specific advantages include the following:

1) Safety Improvements - Safety is a priority in ODOT's Strategic Action Plan (SAP) and Great Streets funding supports catalytic improvements on our most dangerous roads. By prioritizing the safety of all users, including people walking, biking, and driving, investments in Great Streets can help reduce the number of accidents and injuries on our roads. This means fewer emergency room visits and lower medical expenses, which can save money in the long run.

2) Economic Benefits - By revitalizing streets and creating more walkable and bikeable communities, businesses can see an increase in foot traffic and revenue. This economic boost can result in increased tax revenue for the state and the creation of new jobs.

3) Public Health - Creating more walkable and bikeable communities can have a positive impact on public health. By providing more opportunities for physical activity, the program can help combat the rising rates of obesity and related health problems. This can lead to lower healthcare costs and a healthier population, which can benefit the state in many ways.

4) Climate Change: This program helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. By encouraging more people to walk, bike, and take public transit, Great Streets can help reduce the number of cars on the road and the amount of carbon emissions they produce.

5) Environmental Justice and Equity: Great Streets promote equity by improving access to transportation for underserved communities. Nearly 27% of Oregonians do not have a driver's license. By creating more walkable and bikeable streets, the program can help reduce transportation costs for low-income households and provide more transportation options for low-

income people who may not own a car. This can help reduce transportation-related barriers to education, employment, and other opportunities while improving air quality in neighborhoods.