

**MAXINE E. DEXTER, MD**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
DISTRICT 33



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**To: Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation**

**Date: February 13, 2024**

**Subject: Support SB 1572**

Thank you Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Co-Vice Chairs Boquist and Boshart Davis, and members of the committee.

My name is Dr. Maxine Dexter and I am honored to be the State Representative for House District 33, which includes NW & Downtown Portland, Linnton, and Cathedral Park. I am grateful for this opportunity today to share my strong support for SB 1572, which would require ODOT to study extending the Westside Express Service commuter line to Salem.

The reality is that our highway infrastructure is not keeping pace with the growing population of Metro areas. I-5's congestion will not be solved by a lane expansion: we need to invest in rail to create a long term solution that meets the needs of a larger population while also meeting some of our state's climate goals. It is no secret that to lower our greenhouse gas emissions to the extent necessary to avoid the climate warming by 1.5 degrees Celsius, we need to transition more people out of cars and onto mass transit.

Establishing the Westside Express Advisory Committee to study the prospect of extending the WES line is a logical step to provide alternative forms of transportation to driving between Salem and Portland. Owning and maintaining a car is already expensive, and potential I-5 tolling will only heighten these costs: a commuter rail could alleviate many of these costs for people traveling to Salem or Portland for work while also being a safer and often faster method of transport.

I urge the committee to support this bi-cameral, bi-partisan bill so that future Oregonians can have the option of taking a reliable, economical, and safe form of transportation between Portland and Salem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maxine Dexter", written in a cursive style.

Representative Maxine Dexter, M.D.

House District 33 (Northwest and Downtown Portland, Linnton, and Cathedral Park)