

Dear committee members,

I'm writing as a private citizen and Lincoln City resident in support of SB 1563, but only if the safety studied will be that of all road users, including all of us who do not use or own cars.

As someone who does not own a car but uses Hwy 101, I'd like to feel represented in the bill too. For greater inclusivity, may I suggest amending the bill at lines 12 & 13 to read: "...how best to reduce car-dependence congestion and produce safer conditions for all road users at those intersections;".

Hwy 101 is not built for all types of traffic it sees, at least not consistently. In Lincoln City, there's one stretch of complete street that's marvelous to use on foot or bike, but doesn't last long. In Lincoln County, from Hwy 101's intersection with Hwy 18 near Otis on south past Newport, Hwy 101 lacks consistent bike lanes, including in Lincoln City where I use a bicycle as transportation. I share sidewalkless "Main Street" shoulders with log trucks. And, even in Newport, bus stops are not clearly marked, making it difficult for local residents, much less tourists, to easily find bus routes. A student driver living in Otis and working retail at the Lincoln City mall told me it is scary and stressful to make left turns onto Hwy 101 to drive to work, but the bus doesn't run late enough to bring closing shifts home.



Photo #1: Lincoln City, section of complete street



Photo #2: Lincoln City, no sidewalk

Overcapacity of cars to the point of Hwy 101 falling into the ocean suggests an emergency need to add intercity bus transportation, especially at night so people can get home after work or evening events. I support SB1563 if it helps inspire action on that emergency need for professionally-driven buses to reduce crashes, congestion & erosion caused by depending on only cars to visit and live on the coast. I'm very skeptical of adding any more SUV-sized lanes in coastal areas where usable land to build housing is in short supply. Instead, what if buses ran daily from Columbia River Maritime Museum in Astoria to Chetco Valley Historical Society Museum in Brookings, or, as I like to say: a bus from point A to point B.

I also have safety concerns about a point Sen. Anderson raised about "examining crosswalks to see the impact that may have in congestion." I'd hypothesize that adding car lanes plus reducing crosswalks might satisfy drivers who like to swiftly speed through coastal towns. But for residents who use those crosswalks, crosswalk removal is bad, as is land use for more expansive roadways. Any less walkability will only increase car dependence, thus increase road wear, maintenance costs, congestion, crash responder sirens, crash reconstruction closures, and travel hours lost for that town's residents.

If removing crosswalks erodes walkability to bus stops or shopping, then adding frequent crosswalks makes walking easier. Yet, past planning resulted in stretches where safe crossings in Lincoln City are a mile apart. No wonder there is more car congestion! Those who prefer to walk feel forced to drive. Imagine not being able to walk as swiftly as you used to, but the once-an-hour daytime-only City Loop bus stop is a half mile walk to a signaled crosswalk, then a detour back another half mile on the other side to the bus stop. A mile takes a swift walker about 15 minutes, longer for walkers using a cane or with an injury they are healing.

I hope this study will look at how varying percentages of an aggregate of feet, bicycles, motorized chairs, scooters, skateboards and other micro and noncar travel can reduce road surface erosion and create "added" roadway simply by being smaller in scale than if all those same people each used a standard-sized car. Buses and bicycles may be a type of "traffic" that reduces "traffic."

My hope is, that through SB 1563, state transportation department experts will recommend emergency actions like installing consistent Hwy 101 bike lanes or an adjacent car-free sea bikeway, along with more Hwy 101 bus routes, bus frequency, and bus driver training programs, as soon as possible, to keep everyone rolling.

A big reason to visit the coast and rural Oregon is to escape cars, right? Thanks for your service in our community!

