



February 21, 2024

Members of the House Judiciary Committee;

I am writing on behalf of the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce to express our **enthusiastic support for the -1 Amendments to SB 1553**. This Important bill classifies drug use on transit as a drug-designated misdemeanor, providing individuals convicted of the crime with access to state-funded treatment in many instances as well as making illicit drug use on public transportation a crime of Interfering with Public Transportation (IPT)—a Class A misdemeanor.

The Eugene Chamber has been a longtime champion of public transit as a safe, reliable means for members of our community to access school, jobs, medical appointments, errands, social opportunities and more. Businesses invest heavily in public transportation in our community and understand how vital it is for those with no other means of transportation. Students, older adults, people experiencing disabilities, and other vulnerable populations in our community that make up a majority of the riders. It is absolutely imperative that people waiting for, riding, or sending their children off to ride the bus, can be assured that the bus is a safe place.

Using public transportation must be an illicit drug-free experience for passengers and transit employees, especially for vehicle operators and transit station/stop staff members. Unlike a sidewalk or other open spaces, transit passengers and transit employees cannot walk across the street to avoid illicit drug use when they are inside a bus, train or station. When waiting at an outside stop they cannot avoid exposure to illicit drug use or risk missing their ride that takes them to work, school, medical appointments and other activities. Exposure to the physical residue on hard surfaces left from snorting, shooting, and swallowing illicit drugs or breathing fentanyl exhaled into the air from smoking it or smoking other illegal drugs is simply unnecessarily unhealthy and not safe for anyone, particularly for children, elderly, those with chronic illness, and the general public who rely on public transportation.

The passage of SB 1553-1 is critical to the health and well-being of all who use public transit; to all those individuals who deliver this essential service; and to all those illicit drug users who would benefit from access to state-funded treatment that a misdemeanor arrest may provide. Thank you for your consideration. Please support SB 1553-1.

Thank you for considering our testimony and for your dedication to addressing this urgent issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brittany Quick-Warner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "Q".

Brittany Quick-Warner  
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