

TO: Joint Committee on Transportation
FROM: Laulea Miike
SUBJECT: Support HB 3453

Dear Co-Chair McLain, Co-Chair Gorsek, Vice-Chair Boshart-Davis, Vice-Chair Starr, and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

My name is Laulea Miike, and I live in our state capital, Salem, Oregon. **I am a sophomore majoring in environmental science at Willamette University.** I support HB 3453, which will positively affect anyone traveling between the Portland metro area and Salem (and eventually, Eugene). **This bill will increase regional transportation options and accessibility, and reduce congestion and greenhouse-gas emissions from intercity travel in the Willamette Valley.**

- There is a significant need for improved transportation options between communities. HB 3453 would increase access to opportunities for the approximately 30 percent of Oregonians who can't or don't drive, a group that includes a high portion of seniors, young people, and people with disabilities. As a college student looking for internship and volunteer opportunities, I have had to narrow down my search considerably to just Salem. I cannot afford a car right now, and have to rely on walking or asking friends for a ride to the airport, sports games and meets, and outdoor activities. People in rural areas need to be able to connect to healthcare and other services in major metropolitan areas. Likewise, urban residents should be able to access recreation, attend events, and visit friends and family across the state without needing a car. **Intercity transportation to Portland, Salem, and Eugene would mobilize people to travel outside of their normal commutes and receive life-sustaining services.**
- This bill would also help commuter congestion in the I-5 corridor by more efficiently moving people than in single-occupancy vehicles. Carpooling is better than driving separately, but an intercity rail would be the best option to save emissions and money on gas. **Notably, Oregon's transportation sector is the biggest contributor to the state's greenhouse-gas emissions, which this bill would also help reduce.**
- I know many people who have tried to take the Amtrak to the airport or further places during school breaks, and because of their experiences, **I will never take it if I want to get somewhere on time.** Trains give freight rails priority over passenger rails, which delays time considerably, making people late to their appointments.

- This bill is an opportunity to grow our commitment to transit-oriented development, helping us **build healthy, livable communities** that feel connected and comfortable. Increasing WES service to Salem and Eugene will **open the door for vital investments in new housing, retail, education, recreation, and job opportunities around those new stations.**

This bill is a step toward a more connected, accessible, and affordable Oregon, where more people can move freely across large portions of our state without needing a car or contributing to harmful carbon emissions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 3453. I urge you to vote in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Laulea Miike