

Submitter: Brian Ettling  
On Behalf Of: MCAT  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB715

Co-chairs Gorsek, McLain, and members of the Committee.

I am Brian Ettling. I live in Portland. I am a member of the MCAT (Mobilizing for Climate Action Together) Transportation Committee. We advocate for reducing carbon pollution from the transportation sector, Oregon's highest carbon pollution source. We want Oregon's Transportation System to offer more convenient and accessible passenger rail service within Oregon and the Pacific Northwest Region.

We applaud Senators Gorsek, Pham, and Frederick and Representative Ruiz for sponsoring SB 715 creating the Cascadia High Speed Rail Task Force to study, research, and make reports for Oregon high-speed rail. The 2024 Joint Committee on Transportation Road Show showed that many Oregonians want more public transit options, including commuter/passenger rail service, plus increasing frequency and dependability of public transit modes. We believe SB 715 helps achieve this.

A large percentage of Oregonians can't drive, or can't afford to own a car, or don't like to drive and prefer to use mass transit and passenger rail like me. As Oregon interstate highways and roads become more congested with cars which you notice on your commute to and from Salem, let's provide Oregonians with high-speed passenger rail options to reduce the wear and tear on our roads and help clean the air from car tail pipe pollution.

On a personal note, I hate driving, and I love taking the train. My wife and I use the Amtrak Cascades Trains, which runs from Eugene to Vancouver British Columbia, about once a year to visit friends and family in the Seattle area. Last August, a malfunction on the Steel Bridge in Portland delayed our train for two hours. On February 4th, I booked an Amtrak train from Salem to Portland that was delayed for 10 hours due to mechanical issues.

Let's improve dependability and reliability for Oregon's passenger trains.  
Please pass SB 715 as a step forward to do this.

Thank you for taking this into consideration.