

Submitter: **Umatilla County Commissioner John Shafer**
On Behalf of: **Umatilla County**
Committee: **Joint Committee on Transportation**
Measure, Appointment or Topic: **SB 9**

Co Chairs Gorsek, Mclain, Co Vice Chairs Starr, and Boshart Davis, and the rest of the committee:

My name is John Shafer. I am a Umatilla County Commissioner, and I am also the President of the Association of Oregon Counties. I am writing today in strong support of SB 9.

In rural Oregon, where distances are vast and communities are spread out, access to essential services like the DMV can be a significant challenge. In-person DMV tests are not just a convenience but a vital necessity for many in rural Oregon. Getting your drivers license in rural areas, is more than a luxury, it is more than a right of passage, it is essential. When someone is ready to take their test, in many cases it lifts a heavy burden from other members in their family. There is no public transportation to use as an alternative in many, if not most, rural counties. Having to wait for several weeks, or even months, can make the heavy burden even heavier for family members. Once a new driver has their license, there is a freedom like never before. This newfound freedom is even more important in the rural parts of Oregon. Freedom for the new driver, and freedom for the other family members.

By prioritizing in-person DMV tests in rural Oregon, we ensure that all Oregonians, regardless of where they live, can safely and fairly obtain their driver's license in a timely manner. It supports local economies, keeps our roads safer, and fosters a sense of inclusion, where everyone, no matter their location, has equal access to the services they need. Let's stand with rural communities by prioritizing in-person DMV testing in the remote areas of our state. Thank you.