

Submitter: Wendy Wagner

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1202

Creating a new transit and rail department makes fantastic sense for our state. ODOT is fundamentally organized around trucks and cars, and their leadership simply can't understand the needs of transit and rail users. Why keep straining a struggling department that doesn't have the skills, tools, or knowledge required to accurately support Oregonians who use transit?

ODOT has not done a great job managing Oregon's rail and public transit system. It's currently impossible to reach much of Eastern Oregon without using a personal vehicle, which cuts off half the state from valuable tourist dollars. It also keeps Eastern Oregonians from accessing resources -- especially health care resources -- in the west side of the state. These transit issues extend to Southern Oregon, as well. Don't our rural communities deserve better?

One of the best ways to build Oregon's economy is to improve connectivity between its communities. Improved transit is an investment in Oregon's future. Let's get ODOT out of the rail and public transit business so we can see Oregon thrive.