

Submitter: Matt Krabacher
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1202

Below is the verbal testimony that I would have given in support of SB1202 if I had had time during the hearing.

===Verbal Testimony===

Hello,

My name is Matt Krabacher. I am a resident of Baker City, Oregon.

As many of you know, since the beginning of this year there is now no public transit option operating on the I-84 between Boise and Portland. I won't go into all the ways this disadvantages our communities in NE Oregon, since they have already been covered this evening and in this session.

I will just say that I have personally traveled on functional and comprehensive public transit systems in India, the Netherlands, Sudan, Hungary, Tanzania, Guatemala, Mexico and many other countries. I consider the fact that a major arterial interstate highway that traverses our entire country does not have hub to hub public transit along its entirety a fundamental failure of government and an embarrassment.

I ask that the JCT endorse and pass SB1202 so that we may have a dedicated governmental entity that is mandated and empowered to address this failing. I also ask that the JCT prioritize ensuring that it is well led, well resource and sustainably funded so that it may design and coordinate a single, cohesive transit network that spans and connects all areas of our state.

To do so is achievable. Is money well spent. And is just good governance. To do less would be to admit a failure of the Oregon government to address basic services that war-torn African nations are able to cobble together. I ask this committee to dream big, be bold and help us build a future we want to live in.

Thank you.

===End Verbal Testimony===

Below is an excerpt from a newsletter I wrote and published shortly before the hearing. Then entire text of which can be found at;
<https://neoregonpassengerrail.substack.com/p/the-proposed-oregon-department-of>

===Newsletter Excerpt===

Having an entire state department dedicated to the coordination and planning of a

statewide public transit system would ensure that it is functional and optimized to reach a maximum amount of Oregonians with the smallest overhead possible. It would give Oregon the focus, skills and energy needed to plan long-term, phased projects to improve our public transit system. What we have now in rural Oregon are small regionally operated transit services, that were generated through grant funding applications by communities in those regions and operate solely in there region. They do no overlap, or connect with one another in any sort of practically usable way. This is because they were not designed with any big picture in mind and there is no coordination between these services.

Specifically for us in northeast Oregon, it would provide a government agency that would have been watching the decline of the Greyhound/Flix bus service and designing a solution to ensure our communities could still be supported with this service. It would be an agency that would take it upon itself, as its mandate, to apply for CID funding to study the restoration of the Amtrak Pioneer route, which ODOT has thus far slept on, even when indirectly told by the JCT to explore as a result of citizen outreach in our area.

We need to ensure that any new department that is created be created with the resources to actually achieve the thing it was created to do. To create this new department and then deprive it of the resources it needs would likely lead to continued degradation and lack of transit options for Oregonians.

===End Newsletter Excerpt===

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. I hope that the JCT can agree to endorse this bill.

Best,
Matt Krabacher