

Submitter: Debbie Booth

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

June 9, 2025

I would like to address funding the state's public transportation system.

As you know, two years ago Sunset Empire Transportation District (SETD) went down and had to borrow money from the state to resume services. Because of that shut down we witnessed firsthand how much that hurt our riders, some of the most vulnerable residents, your constituents of Clatsop County.

We depend on STIF funding to help get our riders not just to work and school, but also to important medical appointments, grocery stores, food banks.

I have heard there is discussion that public transportation was fine before State Transportation Improvement Funds (STIF) were created in 2017. In 1985 the Special Transportation Fund (STF) was created to provide funds for special transportation services to transit districts and counties in Oregon. STF was funded by ID card fees, non-highway gas tax, and cigarette tax revenues. Also, there was money from the general fund that went into STF. Those revenues and the goals of the STF program have since been rolled into the STIF program. STF no longer exists.

Public transportation is such an important part of so many lives in Oregon, that losing some of our funding could be detrimental to so many. One such person is a gentleman, James, that went blind due to Type 1 diabetes. In his first few years he did nothing but sit in his room, depressed. He had to rely on his mom and aunt to take him places and had to work around their schedules. In the last few months, he has been working with our mobility manager and has learned how to take the bus, and a couple other ways, from Ocean Park Washington to PDX and then flew to Las Vegas. He no longer must wait for someone to take him places, he can do it on his own. This is what public transportation can do.

At the very least, please do not cut funding for public transportation.

Thank you.