



Rogue Valley Transportation District

101 S Front Street, Medford, Oregon 97501

Phone: 541-779-5821 | Fax: 541-773-2877 | rvtd.org

June 11, 2025

To: Co-Chair Gorsek, Co-Chair McLain, Vice Chair Starr, Vice Chair Boshart-Davis, and Committee Members:

RE: Rogue Valley Transportation District's written testimony to the Joint Transportation Reinvestment Committee concerning Transit funding

Currently, RVTD operates fifteen (15) routes across eight communities in the fourth-largest urbanized area in Oregon. Since HB2017, using our 2040 Master Plan, we have strategically expanded our transportation network by adding seven (7) new routes, constructing a new transportation facility, and modernizing our aging fleet.

Our district has been fortunate to have strong community support for transportation. In 2021, our community passed a continuation of our five-year serial levy to support our fixed-route system. Unfortunately, we continue to face unsustainable cost increases. Here are some notable increases we have encountered:

The cost of a bus per mile (labor, fuel, and maintenance) has risen significantly. RVTD is experiencing a 59% increase in maintenance costs, which directly impacts the ability to maintain our current service and safety standards.

Compressed Natural Gas Bus: \$0.77 per mile

Diesel Hybrid/Electric Bus: \$1.23 per mile

The cost of a new 35-foot bus has also seen a substantial increase of 64%

2015 CNG: \$451,292

2024 CNG: \$738,443

Health care and other benefits have soared to a 119% increase.

2017: \$2,336,452

2025: \$5,116,604

RVTD funding comes through three primary sources: 47% from the federal government, 28% from the state, and 17% from property taxes. An additional 8% comes from other revenue streams, such as fare collections, advertising, and services.

Last year, due to increased ridership, we received additional funding from the federal government. However, RVTD and other transit systems are facing unprecedented inflationary costs throughout the state, which leaves us with no choice but to consider cutting services. RVTD is working to align our services with funding forecasts and will continue to engage with our local community to meet their needs and expectations.

Our forecasts indicate that, to maintain the level of service we provided before 2017 and to support the new service levels created by HB2017 funding, we urgently need to secure increased funding from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF), Federal funding programs 5307, 5310, and 5339 and renew our five-year property tax levy. As a quasi-governmental entity, we understand the importance of a diverse revenue portfolio. Even with increases in our predictable revenue, RVTD will need to explore ways to generate revenue to meet the expectations of our community.

As the committee discusses the Transportation Reinvestment Package and hears testimony from Oregonians across the state, we ask that you keep in mind that each community is unique. Each transit system's funding is different. Transit agencies' services offer your constituents an alternative to driving and vehicle ownership. For many individuals, public transportation is a vital lifeline; it is often their only means of mobility. Most of us don't think about transportation or transit until we don't have the resources to travel, or someone close to us starts depending on us to help them. Public transportation gives people independence and supports our economy through work, school, shopping, medical services, and other quality-of-life venues. Cuts to transit funding will impact our economy beyond what we have shared with you today.

If you have any questions or need additional information to support your decisions, please feel free to contact me at (541) 608-2413 or jbrown@rvtd.org

Respectfully,

Julie Brown
Rogue Valley Transportation District, General Manager