

Submitter: Erica Maranowski

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-Chairs McLain and Gorsek and Members of the Committee,

Please support HB 2025 to increase transit funding via the STIF program. The increased funding for the STIF program in this package will prevent significant cuts to public transit across Oregon.

I have used TriMet my entire life. Portland and the metro area are one of the few places in the US where the community truly can rely on public transit as one's primary way to get around. Growing up poor, my mother and I could not afford a car. I still cannot afford a car, but my reasons for taking transit now include the fact that it is magnitudes better for the environment, and that it reduces traffic for everyone on our roads (including private vehicles). I take the bus, MAX, and sometimes the streetcar. I also hope to begin taking transit to more distant destinations like the coast and the Gorge.

If transit service were reduced, it would massively effect my quality of life. My commutes would become much longer. My ability to connect with friends and family would be significantly reduced. The flow of my life would become significantly worse day-to-day, week-to-week, and month-to-month.

Over ten years ago, I spent summer 2014 in Taiwan. The quality and frequency of public transit was amazing. People didn't need to plan the timing of their transfers from one line to another, because the buses and trains simply arrived every few minutes. Every bus, train, and station was spotlessly clean. And because transit was so well-funded and well-maintained, it meant that private cars were rare, and a huge percentage of the population used transit. Transit is most effective when it operates at a critical mass of ridership, which calls for sustained ongoing investment to ensure that adequate infrastructure remains in place to serve the community and keep transit a top choice for riders. Taiwan has far less wealth than the US, and yet they still manage to pull this off extremely effectively. Portland and Oregon have set a remarkable precedent for public transit in the US – and we can continue to lead the US in this field.

While it would be ideal for HB 2025 to include even more funding to help expand transit, the funding in HB 2025 will prevent Oregonians like me from being stranded without the crucial transportation I depend on.

Please support HB 2025!

Sincerely,
Erica Maranowski
Portland, OR