

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

I write today in **support of the increased transit funding and the STIF program** in HB 2025. The increased funding for the STIF program in this package will help prevent significant cuts to public transit service across Oregon.

- *I use TriMet buses and light rail for errands, shopping, to go to cultural events & movies, doctors' appointments, to and from PDX.*
- *Losing a major portion of our Portland area transit service would force me to reduce where I shop, visit and do business. Being forced to use an auto for many of the trips I currently make on transit would deter me from making those trips. Gasoline is prohibitively expensive; auto maintenance, repair and insurance costly; parking in Portland is ridiculously costly.*

While the funding proposed in this package is not enough to provide the additional transit service I would like to see, it will prevent Oregonians like me from seeing our transportation options reduced severely. The government has historically provided massive subsidies to support and promote auto use:

- The gasoline tax (Federal tax unchanged since 1989, and unadjusted for inflation; State tax is insufficient) does not come close to paying for the maintenance, repair and expansion of the highway system. Each year Congress votes to transfer the necessary billions from the General Fund to the bankrupt "Highway Trust Fund" – in essence a HUGE taxpayer bailout to subsidize the auto.
- Auto usage enjoys massive subsidies to the oil industry: drilling cost deductions, oil depletion allowance, LIFO accounting, Domestic Manufacturing Deduction. All of these are direct subsidies that support auto use by keeping fuel prices lower than they would be without these massive subsidies.

- The cost of pollution from automobile use is borne by the general public at huge cost to health and welfare, once again subsidizing auto use by shifting the financial burden for the negative impact from the auto onto the general public.
- The cost resulting from the impact that auto emissions have on climate change (storms, heat waves, rising seas, etc) are borne by the taxpayer in one way or another, essentially another subsidy to the auto industry.

Oregon needs to be looking to the future, not to the past. Public transit needs support on parity with the subsidies, direct and indirect, that the auto industry writ large enjoys. This bill does not remotely close this subsidy gap, but to FAIL to pass this bill would be a devastating blow to the long range well being of our communities.

Sincerely,

Charles Hoover

Portland, OR
