

Submitter: Melissa Metz
On Behalf Of: HB 2025
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025
Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain and Members of the Committee:

As General Manager of the Coos County Area Transportation District, I am here to express my strong support for House Bill 2025 and to emphasize the urgent need for increased funding for public transit in our region.

As you may know, the proposed 0.08% increase in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) is not sufficient to meet the growing demands for transit services in Coos County. Without a significant boost in state funding, we are faced with the grim reality of making severe cuts to our services, which will directly impact our community members and local businesses.

Specifically, we will be forced to discontinue essential services such as the Roseburg Express, as well as the Coquille/Myrtle Point and Bandon Demand Response services. Additionally, our service frequency between Coos Bay, North Bend, and Coquille—our county seat—would be reduced from three times a day to just two. This reduction will create barriers for residents seeking employment, education, or essential services, further isolating those who rely on public transit.

Moreover, the current funding constraints will hinder our ability to invest in necessary infrastructure improvements. We cannot continue to operate out of inadequate facilities—a metal pole barn—if we are to provide a reliable and accessible transit system. Our community deserves better.

The transition to a low/no emissions fleet is an essential part of our future, not only to reduce our carbon footprint but also to ensure that we are prepared for the evolving landscape of transportation. However, without the necessary funding, we will be unable to move forward with these critical initiatives.

I also want to highlight that our citizens and employers are willing to contribute to a sustainable transit system, and they recognize the benefits of public transit. Research shows that for every dollar invested in public transportation, there is an estimated return on investment of \$5 in economic activity. This is a win-win for our communities.

In conclusion, I urge you to support House Bill 2025 and help secure the funding needed to maintain and expand transit services in our region. Together, we can ensure that Coos County residents have access to the transportation they need and deserve.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.