

Chair McLain, Co-Chair Gorsek and members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Stevens, and I am writing to support the newly re-organized **Coos County Area Transit (CCAT)** advisory board and, most importantly, the more than **125,000 passenger trips** our small coastal system carries each year. I urge your “Aye” vote on **HB 2025**.

Why CCAT matters to Coos Bay and the South Coast

- **Economic lifeline.** Nearly one-quarter of our riders are commuting to work—shipyard welders, hospital aides, baristas and retail clerks who keep Coos Bay’s economy running. CCAT buses bridge the last-mile gap between job sites on Highway 101 and affordable housing inland.
- **Health & dignity.** The average CCAT weekday sees more than 70 boardings to Bay Area Hospital, dialysis and Veterans’ outpatient care. For seniors on fixed incomes, the bus is often the only way to a doctor’s appointment or the grocery store.
- **Educational access.** Southwestern Oregon Community College estimates 9 % of its credit students rely on CCAT to reach campus; losing evening service means losing class enrollment.
- **Climate and congestion.** In 2024 alone, CCAT eliminated an estimated **610 metric tons of CO₂** by replacing single-occupancy vehicle trips—despite running a mere 16-bus fleet.

How HB 2025 strengthens that mission

1. **Increased STIF payroll tax = reliable operations/expansion funding.** Raising the rate from **0.10 % to 0.30 % by 2030** (Section 54) will nearly double CCAT’s annual STIF allotment. This opens the doors to new routes, maintains daily service, and keep wages competitive to retain CDL drivers.
2. **Equity review of the STIF formula.** Section 56 directs ODOT to examine whether today’s distribution truly meets “reasonable service levels around the state.” Rural, tourism-based counties with high seasonal employment but modest resident population—like ours—have long punched below their fiscal weight. HB 2025 gives CCAT a seat at that table.
3. **Great Streets and Safe Routes dollars.** The bill dedicates \$150 million a year statewide to walkability and small-city corridor upgrades (Sections 110 & 156). Safer crossings at Coos Bay Blvd. and Ocean Blvd. mean more people willing to reach the bus stop on foot or wheelchair.
4. **Predictable match for zero-emission buses.** Federal Low-No grants require a 15 % local share. The new payroll-tax ramp supplies the match CCAT needs to replace its 2009 diesel coaches with battery-electric buses—while the bill’s diesel-tax parity ensures all fuel users pay fairly for the roads we share.

Addressing cost concerns

I recognize HB 2025 also equalizes diesel tax with gasoline. For CCAT that’s roughly \$18,000 in added annual fuel expense—**less than 3 % of the extra STIF revenue we stand to gain**. The net effect remains overwhelmingly positive for riders and taxpayers alike.

Conclusion

CCAT is the mobility safety-net for Oregon's largest coastal port city. HB 2025 secures the long-term revenue we need to keep that net strong, frequent and—eventually—zero-emission. We respectfully ask for your support.