

Submitter: Renee Patrick

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-Chairs McLain and Gorsek, Vice Chairs Boshart-Davis and Starr, and members of the committee:

My name is Renee Patrick, and I live in Bend, Oregon. I'm testifying today because I support a 2025 transportation package that works for ALL Oregonians and reflects our shared values of safety, affordability, equity, and climate resilience. In particular, I urge you to fully fund Great Streets, Safe Routes to School, and Oregon Community Paths.

Oregon's communities need a better transportation system that is healthy, affordable, and safe. Imagine an Oregon where we all have the ability to choose healthy routes to work, school, or just to run errands. Trails and community paths are a benefit to our social structure, along with providing a respite from our busy lives by providing connections to nature that are so important these days. Relatively small investments now can have huge payouts in getting all Oregonians where they need to go while improving our economy, environment, and public health.

It's essential to pass a transportation package that creates connections to nature on the way to work or school and advances our climate goals.

I was recently diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer and am learning how to live a healthy life, given the challenges of my health now. A recent study found that "Patients who began a structured exercise regime... had a 37% lower risk of death and a 28% lower risk of recurrent or new cancers developing, compared with patients who received only health advice, the trial found... Their weekly target was the equivalent of three to four walks of between 45 and 60 minutes, but patients could choose how they got more active."

Even simply giving people like me and others a chance to safely walk or bike to school or work has extreme implications for my ability to enjoy and recover from this devastating condition.

I've been hiking long-distance trails like the Pacific Crest Trail and Appalachian Trail for over 20 years now, and even though I can't carry a backpack anymore, I know I can enjoy Oregon and learn more about my community by walking. The way I hike may have changed, but urban hiking is what I am choosing to embrace now, and a safe infrastructure of paths is important to my new life. Reducing emissions will also go a long way to making the air cleaner and safer for us to breathe while enjoying our

time outside.

New dollars must be prioritized to meet our safety, climate, and mobility needs. If we're going to ask Oregonians to pay more, we have an obligation to put their dollars to work for the future.

That means improving health and safety by funding popular but underfunded programs like Safe Routes to School, Great Streets, and Oregon Community Paths; and improving air quality and lowering pollution by funding clean transportation programs to help low-income Oregonians purchase electric vehicles, put more clean, zero-emission trucks on our roads, and expand charging infrastructure statewide.

We can't afford to wait. Let's build a future where every Oregonian has access to safe, reliable, and sustainable transportation options. I urge you to pass a transportation package this session that moves Oregon forward.

Sincerely,  
Renee Patrick  
Bend, Oregon