

Submitter: Peter Laciano

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

"I am testifying in support of a 2025 Transportation Package that boosts funding for rail, transit, trails, and safe streets. I am heartened that the current bill provides a dedicated funding stream for rail (via the Vehicle Privilege Tax) and an increase in transit funding via the STIF payroll tax. However, I am disappointed that the bill doesn't include the full STIF increase to 0.5% nor funding for trails.

For the sake of safety, climate, jobs, equity, and fiscal responsibility, Oregon must end its single-minded approach of highway expansion and invest in a true multi-modal transportation network. My own personal story is instructive. I was offered a job, with a higher salary, that would have required me to commute to Albany from Portland twice a week. Driving would have been infeasible from both a financial and time perspective. I investigated taking the Amtrak Cascades train/bus, but it is so infrequent as to not be a practical commuter solution. A more frequent Cascades service, where I could sleep or work on my journey, would have enabled me to further my career and boost my salary. Countless Oregonians have found themselves in a similar situation, including my friend who quit a job in Salem because the car commute was unsustainable.

Once again, I urge you to pass a Transportation Package with dedicated rail funding and a STIF payroll tax of 0.5%."