

Submitter:

Annabelle Valdini

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 Annabelle Valdini, I'm 17, and I'm a born-and-raised Oregonian, having lived in Portland all my life. I'm testifying today because I support HB 2025 because of its safety-focused approach to transportation. However, I urge the committee to include funding for trails, off-street networks, and vehicle electrification, as well as specific provisions for addressing climate change.

I've been biking and taking public transit to school for nearly half my lifetime, so this is an issue close to my heart. I depend on safe pedestrian and bike routes and affordable public transit in order to get around in my day-to-day life, so I am in favor this bill's increased gas tax and payroll transit tax to help fund the Safe Routes to School and Great Streets programs. I am happy to pay higher taxes so that my community can save money in the long run through safer public transportation and safe, accessible walkable/bikeable routes. I sometimes dread riding my bike because I know I won't be able to avoid feeling unsafe, whether it's because of a street without bike lanes or a bike path right next to a highway, the only barrier being the remains of some metal poles where a car swerved into the path a week before. If there were to be public transit cuts, I genuinely have no idea how I could get to school and back, because my family, with our single car and various schools and jobs on opposite ends of the city, depends on public transit to take us where we need to go. Kids deserve the freedom to not worry about their safety when they're trying to get to school, and I know this legislature can achieve a transportation system that simultaneously achieves our climate goals and ensures riders' safety.

I support this bill, particularly its funding of Safe Routes to School, but I urge the committee to add provisions for vehicle electrification (such as increasing the number of charging stations to reduce Oregonians' dependence on diesel and gasoline), funding for trails and off-street networks, which are vital to safety and accessibility to rural areas and Oregon's beautiful wilderness, and free public transportation for individuals under the age of 22 in order to reduce costs on families. We need a state that takes care of our safety and public transportation needs—please, add the above provisions and pass this bill for the sake of every member of my generation, in my city and my state. We need a transportation package that supports all of us and our environment. We need a safe home.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Annabelle Valdini