

Submitter: Cameron Bennett

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

My name is Cameron Bennett. I am a transportation planner and engineer in training living and working in Portland.

I'm writing in support of HB2025, particularly the investments in Safe Routes to School and the Great Streets programs. These programs are lifelines, funding safe crossings, sidewalks, lighting, and bikeways that connect people to schools, jobs, transit, and community. Without this funding, too many Oregonians, especially children, seniors, and people with disabilities, are forced to use or cross dangerous roads every day.

I am one of those Oregonians; I cross Powell Blvd., an orphan highway in SE Portland, multiple times every day. I always avoid the intersection with SE 26th Avenue. Sarah Pliner, a young chef and rising star of Portland's culinary scene, was killed by a truck driver at this intersection on October 4th, 2022 while waiting to cross Powell on her bike. The collision tragically occurred during the lunch hour for Cleveland High School, which is across the street. Many high schoolers watched the incident occur - I shudder to think what that experience would be like at that age.

The bill's proposed investments in Safe Routes and Great Streets are urgent needs for these orphan highways across the state, supporting the transition from vehicle throughput to community safety, livability, and accessibility. The higher these numbers are, the better!!!

Auto drivers have historically not paid anywhere near their fair share of transportation system costs. I have zero reservations paying more in vehicle and gas taxes, registration fees, and road user charges to support these critical investments in our communities.

I also want to highlight the importance of investing in active transportation network. On-street investments must be matched with funding for off-street routes. Please include support for the Oregon Community Paths program to help fill critical gaps in our networks, and provide facilities safe for all ages and abilities. Rep. Gamba's proposed e-bike purchase incentive program would go a long way towards making active transportation options accessible and affordable for more Oregonians - please consider including it in this historic investment in Oregon's future.

Please pass HB 2025 and ensure these safety programs are fully funded.