

Submitter: Dawn Mitchell  
On Behalf Of: The Linn Shuttle and Sweet Home Transportation  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-Chair Senator Chris Gorsek, Co-Chair Representative Susan McLain, Co-Vice Chair Senator Bruce Starr and Co-Vice Chair Representative Shelly Boshart Davis, and the members of the Joint Committee on Transportation;

Thank you for your time today and your service to our wonderful state. As you all are very well aware of, costs have skyrocketed on all kinds of goods and services. Driven by inflation and other economic factors, the cost of transit service rose by about 50% from 2019 to 2024. The Senior Citizens of Sweet Home, Inc. (SCOSHI) is a small non-profit that operates 2 separate transportation programs that serves 3 cities and several communities in Linn County. Our insurance costs alone have gone from \$26,300 in 2015 to \$223,800 for 2025. Being historically marginalized, most of our ridership are riders of need, not convenience. 1 in 4 Oregonians can't or don't drive. Approximately 70% of our Sweet Home Transportation ridership are elderly or people with disabilities. Without an increase in funding, SCOSHI will have to make some difficult decisions in 27-29 and beyond to balance the budget with the rise in service costs. This will cause a cascading effect by cutting people off from jobs, school, economical shopping options, accessing healthcare options in the larger cities, and other vital services.

The rising cost of vehicles also is an added strain on an already tight budget. In 2019, SCOSHI purchased a Category B bus for \$162,000. That same bus now costs \$345,000. SCOSHI is very mindful of taxpayer dollars. As long as a bus is viable, it runs. At the beginning of the 23-25 biennium- 50% of our fleet was past its FTA useful life. STIF funds are a vital source to help preserve public transit service for all Oregonians. It allowed us to replace buses that were no longer reliable and economically feasible to operate.

House Bill 2025 is a sensible compromise that will help maintain and preserve Oregon's transportation system.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill.