

Submitter: Ariel Mendez
On Behalf Of: Individual City Councilor
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Vice Chair Starr, Vice Chair Boshart Davis, and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment,

I write to you as an individual Bend City Councilor. Increased funding for transit is one of the best economic investments we can make and is one of the primary reasons I support this bill. Please ensure that the payroll tax does not go below 0.3%. I think it would be better at 0.5% but I'm sure you are working with political necessities.

I wanted to draw your attention to one area where the bill falls short: funding for ODOT's Great Streets. I am 100% in favor of increasing safety funding, but this aspect of the bill misses the mark for the following reasons:

1. Highway 97 between La Pine and Madras is one of if not the most dangerous section of highway in the entire state. But safety projects on that corridor are not eligible for Great Streets funding.
2. There are no streets eligible for Great Streets funding in Bend, the largest city in Central Oregon.

My ask to you is to either expand safety funding with a bigger set aside for other ODOT safety initiatives, or expand the eligibility requirements for the Great Streets programs so that more roads in Central Oregon qualify.

Thank you for your attention and work on this.

Yours,
Ariel Mendez
Councilor, City of Bend