

Submitter: Phillip Taylor

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation, thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Phillip Taylor, and I'm a proud member of ATU 757. I've worked as a bus operator at Lane Transit District for 10 years, serving Lane County.

In my ten years of work, I've seen more instances than I can count of people who rely on our transit system. I regularly transport the elderly who are unable to drive, do all of their shopping, get prescriptions, and general travel for entertainment with our transit system. I see how it helps level the playing field of lower income people as they use it to get to work every day. I see how it's a lifeline for the unhoused to have any ability to move around the region we serve.

The 0.2% increase, which brings the STIF payroll tax rate from 0.1% to 0.3%, is a huge improvement over the original 0.08% proposal. This new rate is enough to prevent deep service cuts that many agencies, including mine, were preparing to implement. The original 0.08% proposal would have led to significant reductions in service and threatened jobs. ATU 757 fully supports this increase to 0.3% as it gives us the ability to protect service, preserve jobs, and keep Oregon's riders moving.

I am not an economist or pretend to know the inner workings of Lane Transit Districts' budget, but it is easy to see that any reduction of state funds would negatively impact our ability to serve the people in our area at a time of impending economic uncertainty this would have a detrimental effect to those most at risk.

Help us help our community and make Oregon stronger by lifting those that need it most up. Please pass HB 2025 with the full increase to a 0.3% STIF payroll tax. This is the level of funding our agencies need to maintain service, protect jobs, and keep Oregon's economy moving. Thank you for your time and for supporting the workers and riders who keep Oregon connected.