

Submitter: Maria Elena Baptista

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

My name is María Elena Baptista, and I live in Washington County. I am testifying today because I support a 2025 transportation package that works for ALL Oregonians and reflects our shared values of safety, affordability, equity, and climate resilience.

I am writing to you with a deep concern for the safety of our streets and highways—a concern that affects our community at large, but particularly those, like me and the overnight delivery workers, who spend hours on our streets, avenues, and highways.

The need for safer and more accessible transportation infrastructure is critical, and one specific problem demands immediate attention: the lack of adequate lighting and the dangers of our neglected roadways, which are very difficult to navigate, especially at night.

I have witnessed and heard countless stories from colleagues, friends, and neighbors—especially those who work in delivery services, people movers, and food delivery workers—about the dangers they face driving at night where visibility is poor and streets are neglected. Streets like the major and busy ones in Portland, Hillsboro, Forest Grove, and Cornelius become especially dangerous due to the lack of streetlights, which, combined with the poor condition of some roads, creates a high-risk environment.

Pedestrians and cyclists are very difficult to see on these dark streets, as there are no bicycle lanes or crosswalks. Unfortunately, it is becoming all too common to hear about the dangers these poor roadways pose, to the point of causing accidents because drivers, despite all their caution, could not see a person until they were very close due to the lack of lighting. This endangers the lives of pedestrians and cyclists and generates fear and stress for drivers. This situation demands urgent measures to protect all road users.

Safer and more equitable streets are urgently needed for our Washington County, as we deserve and need a safe and equitable place for all its residents. It is urgent to invest in more street lights on our roads, especially in residential and commercial areas where pedestrian and bicycle traffic is high. We need improvements on overlooked streets, including clear signage at corners, safe, dedicated bicycle lanes, and well-marked and illuminated crosswalks.

We all deserve to feel safe while traveling around our county, regardless of the time of day or mode of transportation we choose. Full funding for Safe Routes to School,

Excellent Streets, and Oregon Community Trails will improve the safety and quality of life for all Oregonians. A safe, fully funded multimodal system enables the movement of people and goods, and the prosperity of families and businesses.

I hope I and all Oregonians can count on your support. Thank you for your time.