

Submitter: Lee Curran

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-Chairs McLain and Gorsek, Vice Chairs Boshart-Davis and Starr, and members of the committee:

My name is Lee Curran and I live in Klamath Falls in Klamath County. I'm submitting written testimony because I support a 2025 transportation package that works for ALL Oregonians and reflects our shared values of accessibility, safety, affordability, and climate resilience. In particular, I urge you to fully fund public transit in rural areas.

Oregon's transportation package is an important opportunity to invest in what matters most to our communities and is increasingly necessary for people to survive, let alone thrive. To truly deliver for all Oregonians, including the 30% who don't or can't drive, we need a package that prioritizes access, equity, and sustainability.

We have lived in Klamath County for two years after relocating for retirement. Now retired, I like to think of it as repurposed, we share one car and haven't used public transportation here due to lack of accessibility, particularly in the evening hours when it is dark in the winter. There is a tremendous need for public transportation that is much more expansive than my personal needs. My husband and I volunteer at a local food pantry that runs in the evenings. The current hours of 8am to 5pm that Basin Transit Service runs do not intersect with the pantry hours and folks have difficulty accessing food.

Think about it, people are food insecure and many don't have their own personal vehicles and can't access the resources to elevate their well being. In addition to that, some of these same people are facing cuts in SNAP, the local Klamath-Lake Counties Food Pantry has been negatively impacted by the cuts in federal programs and the potential of federal legislation instituting work requirements for medicaid recipients may be coming in the near future.

I implore you to prioritize the needs of rural communities and fund public transportation. If people are to access food, medical care and the jobs they need to keep their medicaid or have employment dependent health insurance, accessible and affordable public transportation is a MUST! We can't leave Oregonians in this devastating loop of Catch 22s where they need to work to get health care and they need to be healthy in order to work, and they need to have access to public transportation to hold a job and earn a paycheck to feed themselves and their families. These are mutually reinforcing barriers that accessible transportation can be

the lynchpin in breaking down and opening up a myriad of opportunities.

In these increasingly chaotic times when meeting basic needs is difficult, I urge you to pass a transportation package this session that moves Oregon forward and recognizes the humanity and dignity of all Oregonians!

Gratefully,
Lee Curran, Klamath Falls