

Submitter: Lily Burnett

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-Chairs McLain and Gorsek and members of the committee:

My name is Lily Burnett and I am a small business owner in the Parkrose neighborhood of East Portland. I'm testifying today because I support a 2025 transportation package that prioritizes safety, access, and community resilience by making it easier to walk, bike, or take public transit in East Portland. In particular, I urge you to fully fund Safe Routes to Schools, the Great Streets program, and public transit to support our communities and businesses.

I am the owner of Parkrose Coffee Shop, located at the corner of NE 105th and Sandy Blvd. Two weeks ago Trimet expanded service in Parkrose and added a Line 87 bus stop across the street from my business. It has already made an improvement by increasing foot traffic and creating more options for customers to travel to us! We are now accessible to customers traveling to and from Gateway Transit Center and Parkrose Transit Center without having to navigate deteriorating or missing stretches of sidewalk and dangerously fast car and truck traffic up and down Sandy Blvd. Four of my six employees don't drive and now have better bus access to work, which makes for a much safer commute than walking to our coffee shop, particularly for those who have to open during winter hours when it is dark out in the mornings. That is the kind of positive impact that adding service can have on a small business like mine.

Being located on a stretch of Sandy Blvd that is managed by ODOT means that the Great Streets program has so much potential to help us make our Parkrose Business District a safer and more accessible main street but we need the program to be fully funded to achieve that. I know neighbors who drive across Sandy Blvd to access the grocery store that is a block away because it's too dangerous to try to cross the street by foot or bike. We are lucky to be located on the South side of Sandy so that neighbors can walk or bike to our shop without having to cross Sandy, I can't imagine how much less business we would get if we weren't so lucky.

I urge you to invest as much as possible in public transit. An investment in public transit is an investment in small businesses. This is the public infrastructure that has the power to create new customers, new neighborhood access, and safer experiences for employees traveling to and from work. The fact that people from the neighborhood now walk to the 87 bus stop and see my coffee shop while they wait for the bus is creating more vitally needed foot traffic for my small business.

Thank you for fully funding Safe Routes to Schools, Great Streets, and public transit. These investments help small business owners like me and help main streets like the Parkrose Business District.

Lily Burnett
Owner, Parkrose Coffee Shop
Portland, Oregon