

Joint Transportation Committee
Hearing on HB 2025: Transit Day (June 11, 2025)
Testimony from Commissioner Paul Savas

Good afternoon, co-chairs Gorsek and McLain. I am Clackamas County Commissioner Paul Savas, and am testifying on my own behalf today **in support of additional language to improve transit coordination and service in the metro region.**

Clackamas County is the third most populous county in Oregon, and proudly home to the largest rural population in the state.

As it relates to basic transit services, Clackamas also has the highest **unserved** population in the state—over 200,000 people—more than half of which are in **urban** Clackamas County.

Clackamas is home to, and has coined the phrase, transit deserts.

STIF was formed in 2017 to expand transit connectivity. “Improvement” is the operative word, and I recall the legislative intent was for agencies to use STIF funds to provide access to those without. It was, and is, honorable to preserve funding so that employees can get to work, home, doctor, grocery store, etc. After all, they are paying for it. The STIF funding deducted from employees’ paychecks must be directed to the expanded access promised in 2017.

I ask you all to consider the thousands of employees who are paying for transit but getting nothing in return.

The paradigm must change.

Clackamas County is requesting additional language in the bill **for the state to convene a transit workgroup that includes local stakeholders to resolve and improve interagency partnerships and service, and address transit gaps and unmet needs in the region.**

Investing in transit is investing in our communities. It connects people to jobs, enhances economic opportunities, and fosters an environment where all neighbors can thrive, regardless of where they live.

Let’s work together to create a transportation system that serves all residents equitably.

Thank you for your commitment to addressing these pressing transit needs. I look forward to collaborating on solutions that will ensure our communities have the access they deserve.