

Submitter: Josh Hetrick

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

This transportation package must work for all Oregonians to improve safety, mobility, accessibility, equity, and climate resilience. I support House Bill 2025, particularly the investments in Safe Routes to School and the Great Streets programs. It's great to see common sense improvements like better funding for transit (especially rural agencies), more crosswalks, better lighting, and investments in Safe Routes to School and the Great Streets programs.

However, Section 160 works counter to those goals. Wider lanes mean higher speeds, longer crossing distances for pedestrians, and reduce space that could otherwise be used for sidewalks, bike lanes, or safer shoulders. Many of our high-crash corridors are state highways, such as Powell Blvd and McLoughlin Blvd in the Brooklyn neighborhood where I live. There have been numerous deaths and serious injuries on both, and Section 160 would make it harder to make desperately-needed safety improvements to those streets. Section 160 should be removed from this bill.

Additionally, the Rose Quarter expansion project continues to be overly-expensively and wrongly focused on widen the roadway and increasing lanes. Highway lids are welcome, but the rest of the project works counter to that purpose and in fact makes the lids more expensive. ODOT has also repeatedly demonstrated a lack of oversight and accountability, with massive cost overruns on every major project. This project needs stronger guardrails and better direction so that it actually serves the communities it affects.