



Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment

**Testimony in Support of HB 2025**

Bandana Shrestha, State Director

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with 500,000 members in Oregon. We work to improve the quality of life for all as we age and fight for the issues that matter most to people 50+ and their families - including health security, financial resilience and livable communities, which includes expanding transportation and mobility options.

Oregon is aging faster than expected. As of this year, there are more Oregonians aged 65+ than children under 18. This is a permanent demographic shift. In some rural areas, older adults make up half the population. The fastest-growing group? Those over 85.

Transportation is a top concern for older Oregonians. I recently met with AARP members in Eastern Oregon who shared how critical it is to have reliable public transportation to stay independent and connected. On average, people outlive their driving years by 7 to 11 years. Without alternatives, they face isolation and declining health.

We also consistently hear from AARP members about the need for safe streets—more crosswalks, sidewalks, and safer walking routes—to help them move around their communities safely and with confidence. Older adults remain some of the most vulnerable road users and pedestrian. That is why AARP has consistently advocated for expanding mobility options and robust investments in public transit, safe streets, multimodal options, and age-friendly infrastructure across Oregon.

In 2017, we advocated for funding for public transit and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF). From Medford to La Grande, we have seen the result of that funding which has made possible services that connects residents to neighbors, work, groceries, doctors, pharmacies, and downtown—improving lives and strengthening communities. But the need is outpacing services across Oregon – especially for older adults and people with disabilities who are reliant on public transportation. We cannot afford to fall behind. That is why AARP supports HB 2025's proposed funding increase to the STIF.

Fully funding and prioritizing public transit and safe streets program like Safe routes to school and great streets that benefit young and old alike is not optional—it's essential. We also need off-street trails and paths and urge you to consider adding investments for these to expand options and connect communities.

Thank you for listening to Oregonians across Oregon and for your good work on HB 2025 to build a transportation system that is safe, reliable, equitable, and age-friendly.