

Submitter: Louise Michel

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Co-Chairs McLain and Gorsek and Members of the Committee,
I'm writing in today to support House Bill 2025 because I know we can prevent so much suffering by making our streets safer with the investments made in this bill. As we all face increasing stress from economic uncertainty and national politics casts a huge shadow on us, people will start driving more recklessly and lose their tempers more. The funding of traffic-calming resources in this bill can help mitigate this. As people's budgets shrink, they will need additional budget-friendly options like biking and public transit to access increasingly scarce and far-flung healthcare resources. This bill maintains service levels and will help build infrastructure to make walking and biking more accessible to help mitigate this.

I know you'll hear a lot about taxation concerns, but who is almost always left out of those conversations? The 30% of Oregonians who can't or don't drive: elders, people with disabilities, students and kids, veterans in rural areas... On a personal level, living in Tigard, my grandparents are increasingly unable to drive - which puts stress on my mother to help them access medications, groceries and doctor's appointments. My mother also cares 24/7 for my younger sister who is disabled. My other younger sister cannot afford a car, but needs to access her college in Portland and her job, using public transit to travel back and forth. However, the insufficient service and lack of connections means she spends a lot of time commuting and we often spend time driving her to the bus stop. You can imagine this puts a tremendous amount of pressure on my mom and to a lesser extent myself, to keep everyone going where they have to go. The investments in this bill give me hope that the government can still solve problems for families like ours.

It's also often left out of the taxation conversation that transportation is Oregonians' 2ND biggest cost after housing. That isn't from bus passes and bikes, that's private car ownership which necessitates constant maintenance, gas, and insurance. As a car driver, the price of insurance has gone up so much that it's made a noticeable decrease in my own budget for other things like food, travel and entertainment. So I'd much rather pay additional taxes to the state to give everyone options that make economies better and fight the epidemic of loneliness by connecting people to community... than give that money to private corporations that do nothing. The tax people never mention that and will tell you that they don't care what happens to disabled people. Since this 'eugenics' attitude is the federal government's now as well, it's especially important to make these investments at the state level.

Please ensure funding for Safe Routes to School, Great Streets, Oregon Community

Paths and public transit are fully-funded in this bill and get it passed for all Oregonians.