

Submitter: Kate Wilson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

I co-manage Link Lane, the rural bus service provided by Lane Council of Governments. I did sign up to give testimony at the hearing, but I unfortunately was not called upon before I had to leave the meeting at 6:45. I wanted to testify in support of House Bill 2025, and specifically ask for your support for the increase in STIF funding. Link Lane operates 2 fixed rural routes: the Eugene-Florence service as well as the Florence-Yachats service. These are both lifeline services for Lane County rural residents and have filled important gaps in the statewide transit network since their inceptions in 2020 and 2018 respectively. Both routes have seen significant ridership increases each year of service, showing the growing need for transit in rural Oregon. The communities along this route have high percentages of people identifying as having a disability, people 65 and older, and people living below the 100% poverty level. Many of our riders do not own vehicles and use our services to access jobs, medical services, and necessary shopping trips. Many riders choose to ride Link Lane to avoid driving along dangerous roadways – Highway 126 between Eugene and Florence, and a very windy, narrow portion of US-101 between Yachats and Florence.

As a small rural service, Link Lane has served many different types of riders, such as:

- Clients of our non-profit partners traveling to access social services
- Through hikers traveling along the Oregon coast who do not feel safe hiking between Florence and Yachats
- Mapleton high school students have the opportunity to go to Florence for summer jobs.
- International visitors excited to see the Oregon coast
- Hourly workers traveling daily to their jobs
- Older adults who do not feel safe driving

The proposed increase for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund is vital to keep our services running as Link Lane services will be funded primarily with STIF funding in the upcoming biennium. This STIF increase will ensure rural residents along the coast of western Lane County will be able to access vital destinations. Please support House Bill 2025.