

Submitter: Anna Norman

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Representatives,

I'm thankful to see that transit is funded to maintain service with the increase to the .3% STIF, but I urge you to increase the STIF to .5% to expand service.

When you imagine the future of transportation, you may imagine a future filled with driverless cars, where you get from point A to point B without ever touching a steering wheel or even owning a car. That's a compelling vision. But I would argue that we already have that technology - It's the same experience of riding a bus or train.

Last week, I took the Amtrak from Portland to Seattle for my dad's birthday. I got half a day's work done on my laptop while watching the landscape roll by. I didn't have to focus on traffic or worry about parking. And unlike a single driverless car, that train carried hundreds of people at once. The future of transportation is already here. We just need to fund it.

On average, Americans are spending about 20% of their monthly income on car-related expenses, including loans, fuel, insurance, and maintenance. An increase in the STIF and an expansion of transit would allow residents to rely on other forms of transportation and decrease their car-related expenses, or even allow them to not own cars at all.

Alternate forms of transportation are fundamentally cool technology, they are also essential for the 30% of Oregonians that can't or don't drive, and they benefit the whole community. I come from a background in user-centered design, where we often rely on a principle called the "curb cut effect." Curb cuts, the small sidewalk ramps originally created for wheelchair users, are now used by nearly everyone: parents pushing strollers, travelers rolling luggage, delivery workers with carts, and cyclists alike. This principle is simple - when we design for those most in need, we end up benefiting everyone.

This idea applies to more than sidewalks. It's true for subtitles, speech-to-text technology, and most importantly, public transit. Buses, trains, and safe bike lanes are not just "nice to have." They are essential for many Oregonians who cannot drive. And when we invest in these systems, everyone benefits, whether they use them daily or not.

Here are a few of the benefits of public transit:

- Reduced emissions and improved air quality.
- Less noise pollution
- fewer fatalities from car crashes
- Lower cost of living when households can save money when car ownership isn't mandatory.
- More space for parks, housing, and walkable areas instead of freeways and parking lots.
- Tourists navigate more easily without needing a rental car.
- Local businesses thrive with increased bike and foot traffic.
- People live healthier lives, reducing healthcare costs across the board.

Thank you,

Anna

Senate District 19, House District 38