

Submitter: Shelby Kugler

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Dear Co-Chairs McLain and Gorsek, Vice Chairs Boshart-Davis and Starr, and members of the committee:

My name is Shelby Kugler and I live in West Linn. I offer my testimony because I support a 2025 transportation package that works for all Oregonians and reflects our shared values of safety, affordability, equity, and climate resilience. While I understand the emphasis on road and bridge maintenance and improvement, I want to urge you to pass a package that also (a) supports Oregon's continued leadership in electrifying transportation and (b) invests significantly in improving broadly accessible, efficient, and rapid public transit for all Oregonians. To that end, I want to emphasize just two things.

- Please, fully fund programs to help Oregonians who purchase an electric car or truck have accessible charging by providing support for the Community Charging Rebates and Zero Emission Fueling Program which bring key charging infrastructure to rural and underrepresented communities. As the federal government abandons transportation electrification, states like Oregon need to take the lead and these programs are critical to achieving that.

- I also ask that you begin to lay the groundwork so that in the future Oregon's communities have a comprehensive public transportation system that is accessible, efficient, and affordable. A good start on addressing this for Oregon would be to set aside some of the revenue raised by this bill to begin planning and developing (Electrified) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) programs that serve our rural, suburban, and rural communities and link them together. Such programs, increasingly in use in other parts of America, would not only meet our transportation needs; they would also be a powerful tool for overcoming the cultural urban-rural divide in the state. A relatively small investment to kickstart the process of building statewide, interlinked BRT systems will have huge payouts for all Oregonians: linked BRT systems across the state would not just address mobility deficits—they would also improve our economy, environment, and public physical and social health. Achieving this dream will take time, but it is a dream worth making into reality. A set-aside of some of the revenue raised by this bill could help a statewide taskforce begin to envision such a better future.

As you well know from other testimony, I could add much to this two-item wish list. So let me close with this: whatever you finally pass in this omnibus bill, please be mindful every step of the way that new dollars must prioritize Oregon's climate and mobility

needs; that's the best way to ensure that having asked Oregonians to pay more, you put their dollars to work for a better future for all Oregonians.

Sincerely,
Shelby Kugler
West Linn, Oregon