

Testimony for the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment

June 26, 2025 Hearing

Brian Vitulli, General Manager – Tillamook County Transportation District

Good afternoon, Co-Chairs McLain and Pham, and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment. **My name is Brian Vitulli, General Manager of Tillamook County Transportation District. I'm here today on behalf of the Oregon Transit Association to express our support for House Bill 2025 with the -A28 amendment.** Thank you for the opportunity to share with you how essential our services are for our rural residents and how important increased State support is for what we do.

TCTD provides public transportation options throughout northwest Oregon, and a non-emergency medical transportation brokerage for Tillamook, Clatsop, and Columbia counties.

I am here today to testify in support of House Bill 2025 with the -A28 amendment. Increased funding for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund is greatly appreciated and will help prevent significant cuts to public transportation throughout Oregon.

As I've shared with you over the past year, the only dialysis center in the Tillamook area closed over one year ago, leaving numerous dialysis patients with no way to get to life-sustaining treatment. And we are currently still providing transportation for approximately 12 individuals for life-sustaining care, two to three times per week to locations well outside of our service area. The critical care provided to these citizens would not be possible without funding support from the STIF Program.

Stories like this are happening all across the State, and the STIF program is credited for enabling rural transportations districts like mine, to answer that call.

While the funding proposed in this package is not quite enough to allow many providers to expand service, and some cuts may still be necessary, this increase in the STIF will prevent tens of thousands of Oregonians from being stranded without access to the transportation services they depend on. Thank you all for your hard work on this vital piece of legislation.

Please support HB 2025 with the -A28 amendment.

Benefits of STIF Can Be Seen in our Community Today

TCTD has relied greatly on STIF for the expansion and continued operations of services and for projects and programs that benefit our customers and enhance where we live. TCTD and the community it serves has benefited from the following STIF-sponsored projects:

- Subrecipient operations support for local human service organizations
- Enhanced deviated fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride services
- Reduced fare program
- Short- and long-term transit planning and human service transportation coordination
- Continued operating funds and capital rolling stock purchases.
- And as you just heard, STIF Contingency funds is allowing us to provide life sustaining transportation for dialysis patients in our area to treatment centers far outside. STIF has allowed the District to absorb these unexpected costs without impacting our other services.

Using STIF to Plan for a More Impactful Future

With an expanded allocation of STIF dollars, it would enable TCTD to:

- Explore innovative service models that could accommodate more customers, more efficiently; and implement those innovations to be more beneficial to vulnerable populations and attractive to choice riders
- Increase frequencies on higher-ridership in-county routes
- Implement additional intercity Coastliner service between Tillamook and Portland, with connections to Amtrak at Union Station
- Acquire transit vehicles to support the operation of the abovementioned improvements
- Advance efforts toward transitioning District vehicles to low- or zero-emission technologies.

By providing more convenience and reliability to existing service and incorporating more of the types of services that our current and future customers want, the Tillamook County Transportation District can expand its reach by continuing to connect people to employment opportunities, medical care, and shopping and social needs. An increased STIF allocation can make that happen in Tillamook County and throughout Oregon.

About Tillamook County Transportation District

TCTD provides a range of transportation services to customers throughout Tillamook County, with routes traveling into Clatsop, Lincoln, Washington, and Multnomah counties.

With a county population of approximately 27,400 residents living within 1,100 square miles, a majority of its residents are scattered among seven incorporated cities and 14 unincorporated communities. Around 80% of the County's residents live along U.S. Route 101. The City of Tillamook serves as the county seat and is the largest population center in the County with just over 5,200 people.

Operating a fleet of approximately 30 vehicles, ridership has responded positively since the pandemic. The past year, TCTD provided nearly 120,000 passenger trips. Despite being challenged with a shortage of available transit drivers, made worse by a shortage of affordable housing, the District continues to provide essential transportation services to a large rural environment.

Reach Out

Please contact Brian Vitulli at 503.842.3115 or bvitulli@tillamookbus.com for more information.

