

Submitter:	Bill Bradley
On Behalf Of:	ATU 767
Committee:	House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	HB3402

Good afternoon, Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice Chair Pham and members of the committee. My name is Bill Bradley and I am here today representing the Amalgamated Transit Union, the ATU. I stand before you to strongly oppose House Bill 3402 and its -3 amendment.

For too long, the critical financial state of our transit agencies has been ignored. This isn't just an Oregon problem; it's a national crisis. We are already witnessing devastating cuts right here in our state, from Medford to our northeast communities, mirroring what we see in cities like Philadelphia.

These amendments, by failing to provide stabilizing transit funding, will inflict irreparable harm. Harm to our transit agencies, to the dedicated workers who keep our communities moving, and ultimately, to the riders who rely on these vital services. They will lose access to their jobs, their education, their medical appointments, and their social connections. This isn't just an inconvenience; it's isolation.

The ATU estimates a reduction of over 500 jobs in the coming years due to this inaction. We've just begun to recover from the pandemic, and another setback of this magnitude risks plunging our transit system into a "doom loop." This is not just bad for transit; it's bad for Oregon. Increased congestion, more vehicle miles traveled, and greater environmental impact will be the inevitable consequences.

For over 18 months, we have made it abundantly clear: transit is a fundamental part of our transportation system. A few thousand Oregon transit workers provide hundreds of millions of rides each year – rides that are often commonplace commutes, but just as often, critical connections to medical care. The financial cost of these rides pales in comparison to the human cost of not providing them. We risk a deterioration of what it means to be an Oregonian, a state where we truly take care of each other. This bill, as it stands, fails that ethos.

We urge you to address this urgent need for increased transit funding. We don't have to let this happen. The ATU stands opposed to HB 3402 and its -3 amendment, and we implore you to consider the real, immediate, and lasting impacts on our communities. Thank you.