

Submitter: Susan Hansen  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1543

Dear Chair Gorsek, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the committee,

I have been very concerned for a long time about the grant program after watching the transportation plans my city neighbor Molalla has created via ODOT grants over the past decades. I even took the time to testify in person before the Commission about how I was concerned grants were given out freely to cities who had zero capacity to implement the "plans" that were created. In Molalla's case it has been crystal clear that there was no money to do the elaborate plans the grants allowed them to create. The most recent plan even had the outside consultants comment at the end of the process - in writing! - that the City of Molalla would be in deficit from the minute the plan was done. We have to spend grants on projects/plans that have a realistic chance of being implemented and I expect Molalla's "plans" are not the exception. It is disgusting that Molalla now will be doing YET ANOTHER plan via a grant when it has crumbling current infrastructure it can't afford to fix.

In another Molalla grant I outlined in previous testimony, ODOT and other agencies gave significant money to help Molalla implement what was supposed to be a business park. That "industrial park" ended up as two small businesses with a dead end road finished on only the business side. Again, there was next to no benefit from that handout which was supposed to foster a real industrial venture. The largest installation on that "industrial park" is nothing but a transfer station for plastic products, barely any "business" benefit! And this is decades since the grant was given. That was not a responsible use of civic money.

As an aging person who lives in a rural area, I note totally inadequate resources here for those who can't drive or who can't afford cars. The so called transit system is very limited in rural areas and would not even serve students who needed to get from south Clackamas County to night classes in Oregon City.

I strongly favor much more oversight on grants to ensure they are going to result in realistic outcomes instead of being absurd, impossible, aspirational dreams. I support expanding transit services that have strong coverage of rural areas and demanding that rural transportation networks that were formed to keep rural cities out of TriMet serve more times and hours.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment,

Susan Hansen  
rural Clackamas County