

Submitter: Dan Jaffee

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Capital Construction

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1601

Dear Chair Girod, Chair Nosse, and committee members:

I am writing to urge you not to redirect funding from the Oregon Community Paths and Safe Routes to School programs to highway maintenance and operations, as currently laid out in the -3 amendment to SB 1601. I do support redirecting funds to operations and maintenance of the current transportation system, but not at the expense of the safety of our most vulnerable community members, our schoolchildren and others who cannot drive. Instead, major highway project funding should be redirected to meet the current highway operations and maintenance needs instead.

I regularly bike and walk on paved multi-modal trails around Oregon--they are absolutely essential for providing safe routes for bike transportation, recreation, and walking. According to studies, more than 80% of Oregonians use local trails, which is a higher percentage of Oregonians than those that drive! Off-street paths provide the very safest places in our community for people of all ages and abilities to walk and bike. The Oregon Community Paths and Safe Routes to School program are already drastically underfunded, and people continue to die on our streets as a result.

Please preserve the following funds from any budget cuts:

1) Multimodal Active Transportation Fund: funded in part by the bike tax and currently directed entirely to Oregon Community Paths program to fund safe, off-street alternatives.

2) Transportation Operating Funds: non-street funding that funds passenger rail, paths, and para-transit)

3) Safe Routes to School Funds

It doesn't matter whether this proposed as a one-year cut. Such "temporary" cuts typically become notoriously hard to restore. Please--don't balance the transportation shortfall on the backs of kids who need safe ways to get to school without being hit by fast-moving cars and trucks, or families who need pathways to safely bike and walk.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Dan Jaffee