

Submitter: Paul Gehlar

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or SB1601  
Topic:

I am opposed to reducing/eliminating previously included funding for Cascades train service from Portland to Eugene. Ridership has increased markedly, now I believe even exceeding pre-Covid levels. Trains are frequently sold out. This funding will impact potential service levels well into the future, particularly eliminating funds for marching federal grants. Investing in rail has great benefit for future Willamette Valley transportation. Private (bus) services have diminished tremendously. We are reliant on Cascades service. Amtrak management has improved greatly over the past two years the quality of service has improved as a result. Now is the time to support Cascades.

I ride Cascades round trip, Salem, Portland most weeks. We're anxious for the new trains coming on service this year. I know this will still happen, but with the investments in new trains and improvements in service generally, ridership will increase. If we don't plan to continue supporting the gains, the system will likely see reductions in ridership.