

Submitter: Mel Scott

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 members of the committee,

I am writing to ask 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 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. I suggest major highway project funding be redirected to meet the current highway operations and maintenance needs instead.

More than 80% of Oregonians report using local trails, that is a higher percentage of Oregonians than those that drive. Off-street paths provide the absolute safest places in our community for people of all ages and abilities to walk and bike.

We Oregonians love the great outdoors and running everywhere including coast to coast! It's a branding of Oregon!

The Oregon Community Paths and Safe Routes to School program are already tragically underfunded, and people continue to die on our streets as a result.

My own experience is that walking feels like it's deeply stressful from the fear of being hit by cars turning while you cross or taking the turn before you do. Walking the dog while an SUV is coming at you without knowing it will stop happens A LOT! Cars sometimes stop on pedestrian crossings or drive on bike paths. Taking a walk should not feel like you can be killed from it the way it feels most of the time I walk.

Please preserve the following funds from any budget cuts:

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.

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

It's with disbelief and discontent that I am leaving this testimony. It's a Super Majority Democrat state not choosing to protect the health and proper stress levels of its citizens leaving us with a dwindling quality of life. It is destroying democracy with this

bill. "Demo" is in Democrat and it's mind boggling how much this does not sink in with some Democrats serving the public in our state mirroring what we see in congress.