

April 19, 2017

Joint Committee on Transportation Modernization and Preservation
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Transit Funding Support

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and McKeown, Vice-Chairs Bentz and Boquist and members of the Committee,

We urge you to support a transportation package with robust investment in public transit funding. In the Portland metro area, additional funding distributed equitably could help increase service and support a reduced fare program to support low-income Oregonians.

Our region's quality of life is world renowned, and our economy is doing well compared to the nation. Sadly, as our economy grows, our lowest-income Oregonians are finding themselves left even further behind. Our region's success has made it more difficult to afford basic needs like housing, food, or medicine, much less transportation to and from work. Additionally, after housing, transportation is the second greatest cost burden for low-income earners. For the 30% of the region's transit riders who make less than \$20,000 per year, it's a major burden in an era of rising costs.

Metro area leaders are ready to address this challenge. Over the course of the last six months, a regional collaborative made up of 22 community members, local elected officials, nonprofit agencies, and transit advocates from Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties met to discuss and craft a low income fare program that is targeted and meaningful to low income families.

The rewards gained by ensuring everyone in our region has convenient, affordable and reliable transportation are incalculable for the success of our economy and working families in our communities. Increased service and reduced fares for low income riders will create even greater access to our community and additional options for our riders. In order to implement these improvements and move forward with a permanent solution to improve transit access for low-income Oregonians, increased state investment in transit funding is critical.

Please support significant funding for public transit in the transportation package.

Sincerely,

