



City of Independence, Oregon

June 8, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the City of Independence, I am writing to express strong support for HB 2017, the comprehensive funding and policy package currently under consideration of the Oregon Legislature. We are grateful for the work done by members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Preservation and Modernization, other legislators and the many stakeholder groups that resulted in the landmark proposal currently before you. Now is the time to take prompt and decisive action to stem the tide of further degradation to our state's transportation infrastructure, and take significant steps forward in enhancing the system's ability to support economic growth and improving the quality of life throughout Oregon. HB 2017 does that.

Further, HB 2017 makes significant investments in assisting cities as they continue to address challenges facing the local portion of the state's transportation network. Some of these include:

- Significant increase in the State Highway Fund in support of city preservation and maintenance efforts;
- A substantial increase in the Special City Allotment program to assist smaller cities with their unique challenges;
- Continuation of the Connect Oregon program with increased funding;
- Significant investments in congestion relief and freight mobility benefiting of Oregon's economy and quality of life statewide; and
- Dedicated funding for intercity public transit.

The City of Independence will be specifically benefitted by HB 2017's investment in the maintenance of our streets. Like many cities, Independence faces a constant challenge of keeping up with the maintenance needs of our streets. We also face the pressures of continued growth and the uncertain prospects of financing the necessary transportation infrastructure to meet our future needs. Freight mobility is also a critical issue for rural communities like Independence. Industry is only willing to locate in areas with good transportation connections. We must ensure that our community retains a direct link to the interstate highway system in-order to support our economic development and job creation efforts.

Any legislation of this magnitude, especially involving the commitment of significant new revenues as envisioned in HB 2017, will undeniably require a difficult vote. Please know as you cast your vote in favor of HB 2017 in the remaining days of this session, that we support you, and indeed applaud your commitment to the future of the City of Independence and the state Oregon's transportation infrastructure.

One of the messages heard throughout Oregon and in the Capitol during the development of this package was “go big, or go home.” HB 2017 is “big.” Please do not “go home” until it has passed.

Sincerely,



John McArdle, Mayor
City of Independence

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