



March 5, 2019

RE: SB 558

Honorable Co-Chairs Sen. Beyer and Rep. McGowan:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 558. The Safe Routes to School National Partnership, working in Oregon via the Pacific Northwest Regional Network, strongly supports the state authorizing cities speed setting authority of five miles per hour lower than statutory speed.

Managing speeds in a way that is responsive to the urban environment, including the complex interactions of people moving by multiple modes, is critical to achieving safe streets. In the context of an urban environment, concerns about vehicle speeds on neighborhood, school, and arterial roadways is a major barrier to students' ability to walk or roll to school and other destinations, and requests for lower speed limits top the list in School Action Plans across the state. Delegating local speed setting authority to cities will allow for speeds to be set more quickly, efficiently, and consistently across street types.

In 2018, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found that "lowering the speed limit in urban areas is an effective countermeasure to reduce speeds and improve safety for all road users." We agree, and are committed to supporting local jurisdictions around the state in reaching their goals to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries. Slower speeds reduce both the number of crashes and the severity of crashes due to the speed differential between young students and vehicles traveling on the roadway. At slower speeds, people driving can stop more quickly, avoiding a crash altogether, and when a collision does occur, there is less of a chance of death or serious injury.

We strongly urge you to support local speed setting authority to cities striving for safe streets. Thank you for your work to ensure Oregon is a safe place for kids to live, play, travel, and thrive.

Yours sincerely,

*Kari Schlosshauer*

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