

Mulino, Oregon
04/10/ 2013

Dear Rep. Read

I am asking you as Chair and a member of the House Transportation and Economic Development Committee, to please support House Bill 2945, to create an Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) for rural Clackamas County.

About ten years ago, I discovered ACTs represented most of rural Oregon with our County being a notable exception. Then (and now current) County Commissioner Martha Schrader provided support and information to help us move towards forming an ACT. Eventually, the ground roots efforts of rural citizens (included representatives from our rural Hamlets, The Villages of Mt. Hood, and the rural CPOs) met numerous times and drafted proposed bylaws in accordance with ODOT guidelines. Clackamas County hired facilitator Rob Zaco and a series of meeting were held. These meeting included speakers from the existing ACTs, and also included the guidance and kind assistance of OTC Chair Gail Achterman of the Oregon Transportation Committee, ODOT Region 1's Rich Watanabe and Clackamas County staff. Meetings were held beginning in August 2010 through February 2011, and then nothing more happened.

Clackamas County is quite unique. Over 32% of its 380,000 residents reside in rural areas of the County. Rural Clackamas County's ~ 1,064 miles of paved roads provide transport for agricultural and forest products to Portland and the entire state. Access to the region's multiple recreational opportunities would not be possible without traveling the roads in rural Clackamas County. More importantly, these roads are a lifeline for rural agriculture, forest, and farm products to get to market.

Despite this impressive usage and need, rural residents do not have a direct input to how limited state transportation dollars are allocated to rural road projects. Area Commissions on Transportation (ACT) are the structures recognized by the Oregon Transportation Commission to provide this feedback on needs and planning for the future. Rural Clackamas County has the only residents in the entire state of Oregon who want to be represented by an ACT and are not.

Over 120,000 rural Clackamas County residents are disenfranchised without representation. Some Statewide ACTs represent about 25,000 population. This proposed house bill is closely patterned after the successful 2009 senate bill which created a Lane County ACT.

Please support equitable for Rural Clackamas County. Please support HB 2945.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Warren L. Jones