



PROTECTING YOUR
RIGHT TO ROAM

February 18, 2013

Board of Directors

*Suzanne Stahl,
President
Steve Bozzone,
Vice-President
Jessica Sands,
Treasurer*

*Members at Large
TJ Ford
Lidwien Rahman*

*Executive Director
Steph Routh*

The Honorable Lee Beyer
Senate Business and Transportation Committee

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 247

Mr. Chair Lee Beyer and Members of the Committee,

My name is Steph Routh, and I am Executive Director of Oregon Walks. Oregon Walks is a nonprofit organization founded in 1991 to promote walking and to advocate for walking conditions that are safe, convenient, and attractive for everyone. I am also a third generation Oregonian, whose family members have worked, raised children, walked and aged in many of our great state's communities, from Beaverton to Klamath Falls, Nehalem to Portland.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of SB 247, ConnectOregon Plus. This would provide lottery funding to improve walking, biking and transit across the state.

Funding for better walking conditions in Oregon has never been more critical, nor more precarious. Oregon DOT is failing to meet its own key performance measures related to pedestrian safety, and it is falling behind national walking safety trends. The state has not allocated the funding to invest in the long-term, life-saving solutions that would help ODOT meet the safety goals to which its leaders are committed. Voting for ConnectOregon Plus –improving walking safety for our state's residents - would save lives and allow ODOT to meet its goals.

According to ODOT's Annual Performance Progress Reports, traffic fatality rates have consistently been impacted by the higher numbers of pedestrian fatalities. The number of pedestrians injured during 2010-2011, for example, was also higher than the national figure (Oregon 21% increase, U.S. 19% increase). Preliminary statistics of 2012 crash data based on the Fatality Analysis Reporting System show a near 30 percent increase in pedestrian deaths during 2012 in comparison to 2011.

ODOT's Key Performance Measure #18 specifically addresses funding for biking, walking, and access to transit. In 2011, ODOT notes in its most recent progress report that, "current funding levels are inadequate to complete the system by the 2030 Oregon Transportation Plan target date."

ConnectOregon Plus takes a job-creating program and makes it better by funding critically-needed walking, biking and transit infrastructure. It would provide more construction jobs per dollar than road projects while paving the way for our region's aging population as its mobility needs change and embrace more fully walking as fundamental to our transportation system.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of SB 247 and your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steph Routh".

Steph Routh
Executive Director, Oregon Walks