



February 19, 2013

Senate Business and Transportation Committee  
Oregon State Senate  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lee Beyer and Members of the Committee,

TriMet strongly supports Senate Bill 260, the so-called ConnectOregon program, and Senate Bill 247, the proposed ConnectOregon Plus program.

ConnectOregon investments address critical state-wide transit capital needs, and the Portland Metropolitan Area has benefitted from the infrastructure improvements that allow transit mobility for commuters, as well as those needing to reach medical and other important social services. These capital improvements are an important part of keeping the metropolitan economy moving.

Past ConnectOregon funding has supported projects like the 188<sup>th</sup> MAX station reconstruction, which substantially improved traffic and pedestrian safety and provided an economic spark for revitalization of Gresham's Rockwood neighborhood. ConnectOregon IV is funding TriMet partner Ride Connection's Resource and Operations Center, which will provide low-cost mobility for job training, work access, and medical needs for many disabled and elderly residents in our region.

As you know, transit districts throughout Oregon have struggled to keep up with the demand for transit service. The proposed ConnectOregon Plus program would create a dedicated funding source for transit operations, a critical need throughout Oregon. While most other states have sales tax or gas tax revenues to help fund their transit systems, Oregon either does not have or is prohibited from using such revenues. The ConnectOregon Plus concept starts the discussion about how Oregon could fund transit operations.

There is a tremendous need for transit capital improvements and operations. Thank you for your time and effort on these important topics.

Sincerely,

Aaron C. Deas  
Office of Government Affairs  
TriMet