



PROTECTING YOUR
RIGHT TO ROAM

February 18, 2013

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The Honorable Lee Beyer
Senate Business and Transportation Committee

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 345

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Executive Director
Steph Routh

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.

Oregon Walks enthusiastically supports SB 345, Shared Narrow Residential Roadways. This legislation would allow people to share the road along narrow residential roadways that do not have sidewalks, which comprise a good deal of residential road networks in Oregon's unincorporated county areas and rural towns.

Jurisdictions throughout the state are experiencing significant transportation funding challenges. Cities such as Portland, Springfield, and Beaverton are growing substantially in population but do not currently have the funding to make the multi-modal safety investments needed along all its roadways. Smaller towns have even fewer resources to build full sidewalks along its roads. Cities and towns are working to strategically build safety improvements along busier streets on which the vast majority of pedestrian injuries and fatalities occur. SB 345 provides an innovative and cost-effective solution to the full transportation network by improving communication and safety along narrow neighborhood roads.

This legislation would legalize what people in Oregon - from rural towns to urban regions - already do on narrow residential roadways: share the road. I think we can all easily remember a moment in the recent past when we have seen a parent pushing a stroller down the roadway to the corner grocery store, or when we have passed a few kids shooting hoops on a side street. This proposed legislation memorializes in law the scenes we have already come to expect on our streets and call home. SB 345 also improves on current road use by posting signage along these designated roads, which helps communicate expectations to people both driving and walking.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of SB 345 and your leadership.

Sincerely,

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

Steph Routh
Executive Director, Oregon Walks