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Dear Chair Gelser and distinguished members of the House Education Committee

I am the mom of a 5th grader of Glencoe Elementary, Portland, Oregon.  
Our school is located in a residential neighborhood with small streets but also spans several high traffic arterial roads.

Our current situation:

We have a number of students that use school buses, many who walk and bike to school and children who are regularly dropped off by car.

We are facing unsafe traffic conditions at drop-off and pick-up time due to the small neighborhood streets surrounding our school: these small streets have few traffic signs and no marked crosswalks. This created tremendous confusion for parents looking for parking spots to drop kids off, kids walking to school and biking families. PDOT can't help with the situation since these conditions only last for about 30 minutes - right before school start and let out.

A possible solution

Expanding the types of costs that qualify as approved transportation costs for purposes of State School Fund distributions would help our school as follows:

We could create marked cross walks and signage on some key streets, making walking and biking to school safer in the mind of parents.

We could have a crossing guard or traffic conductor elevating right of way confusion.

Traffic training will make our students more confident/less unpredictable in being able to handle their walk or bicycle ride to school. Perhaps we should also have some training for the parents who drop off.

Enhanced safety and greater confidence will cut down car drop-off/pickups.

Less congestion and fewer stops will make our bus routes more efficient and means less stress for the bus drivers

To generalize

By opening up the approved transportation costs to the school districts, the money can be used where it makes the most impact:

It will give the school districts the possibility to fix what a department of transportation can't fix: the traffic hot spots and specific problems principals, teacher, parents, students and bus

drivers know about. It could include education, new, more active transport solutions and it can prevent what we all fear: deadly accidents of students.

I know that money in the school districts is very tight - I am involved in fund raising for our school since for years now. To expand the types of costs that qualify bears the promise that some traffic problems could be actually fixed, not just post phoned. And it can be done without raising costs... It's like the old paternal saying: a good choice!

Thank you for allowing to address the committee. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.