



March 11, 2015

Rep. Caddy McKeown, Chair  
House Transportation and Economic Development Committee  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97304

RE: HB 2639 – Providing transit passes to high school students in Lane Transit District

Dear Chair McKeown and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Eugene City Council, I urge you to support House Bill 2639 which will restore funding for transit passes for students in grades 6-12 in Eugene and fund a student transit pass research study in the Lane Transit District service area. Without yellow bus service, many families in our city struggle to afford the transit passes that help their kids get to and from school, home, work and extra-curricular activities. Providing transit passes will eliminate this barrier by restoring transportation access to education for all of our students.

Prior to my career in public service, I worked as an educator in Eugene and witnessed first-hand the impact that transportation had on students' ability to perform. Students with reliable transportation routinely showed up to class on time and ready to learn, whereas students who lacked a guaranteed ride were often late or didn't attend at all.

In Eugene, nearly 12,000 students lost transit passes when the funding for the youth pass program was eliminated in 2009. The City Council regularly hears stories from our community regarding the impact of that funding loss. We've heard from students who could not maintain needed after-school jobs because of transportation challenges, those who have been unable to participate in extra-curricular activities and athletics, and many more who remain unsure how they will get to and from school on a day-to-day basis.

House Bill 2639 fills a critical transportation gap while also allowing an opportunity to study and measure the benefit. The study funded by this bill will allow for an outcome-based review of the program to gauge the success of this type of investment in access to education for our students.

Please support our students and pass House Bill 2639.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kitty Piercy  
Mayor, City of Eugene