
From: sharonkonopa@juno.com
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2015 11:40 AM
To: waysandmeans.transportationecdevsub@state.or.us
Cc: sharon.konopa@cityofalbany.net
Subject: HB5040 for 3-30-2015 hearing

Dear Senators and Representatives of Ways and Means Committee:

I has come to my attention that HB5040 would discontinue funding for Amtrak Cascades. As a member of the Oregon Passenger Rail Leadership Council, we had evaluated the long term needs for a passenger rail route from Eugene to Portland. The Amtrak Cascades train funding is a crucial piece to the efficiency of the rail system. Please consider the following brief statement in your decisions over HB5040.

Thank you for your service,
Sharon Konopa, Mayor of Albany

Amtrak Cascades Legislative Brief The Service

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) partners with Washington State's Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Amtrak to provide the Amtrak Cascades service from Eugene to Vancouver, British Columbia via Portland and Seattle. Two roundtrip trains each day serve Eugene, Albany, Salem, Oregon City and Portland. Four roundtrips a day connect Portland and Seattle, with two daily roundtrips between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. In Oregon, buses supplement the train service by connecting with trains running between Portland and Seattle. Amtrak Cascades is one of the nation's highest ridership passenger rail services, with 215,096 people using Amtrak Cascades trains and supporting buses between Eugene and Portland in 2013. Ridership in the Amtrak Cascades Corridor (Corridor) has steadily increased since the service began in 1994, with 2013's total representing a 45.3 percent increase since 2007 and a 255 percent increase since 1995.

Benefits

Passenger rail provides an option for many travelers and has significant benefits.

? It reduces congestion on roadways.

? It offers a competitively priced, reliable, safer alternative to driving a car.

? It supports the economies of the origin and destination cities, including providing opportunities for tourism.

? It reduces greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, offering an environmentally friendly mode of travel.

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