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Oregon Legislature
House Rules Committee
900 Court St. NE,
Salem Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Hoyle and Members of the Committee,

My name is Gerik Kransky, Advocacy Director with The Bicycle Transportation Alliance. Please accept the following written testimony in support of HB 2736-2 to establish The Task Force on Vision Zero: Achieving Zero Traffic Crashes, Injuries and Fatalities.

We are committed to safety. Vision Zero is the most comprehensive and effective approach we can take in the State of Oregon to prioritize safety first. As we pursue various transportation policy, funding, and design improvements, we must consider our actions from the perspective of safety first.

Vision Zero is a new traffic safety program with the goal to eliminate all road fatalities through road design remediation, education, and enforcement. The value is the idea that traffic fatalities and serious injuries from crashes are avoidable, and should not be tolerated as a trade-off for transportability. Our goal should be to eliminate all avoidable traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

We would like the State of Oregon to integrate a clear unifying Vision Zero policy that sets a measurable goal of reaching zero fatalities and serious injuries with specific dates and mid term goals into updated Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) and Oregon Highway Plan (OHP). In order to achieve this outcome we would like to take the first step and establish The Task Force on Vision Zero: Achieving Zero Traffic Crashes, Injuries and Fatalities.

It is time for us as a community to approach road safety issues with a focus on the value of human life. Decisions must always be based around the principle that it is unacceptable for the current rate of traffic fatalities and serious injuries to continue.

Our goal is to develop transportation safety action plans that address all modes of transportation, that cover all aspects and disciplines from planning to design to operations to maintenance, that are based on an analysis of regional and local crash data and risk factors, and that identify and prioritize investments in roadway projects as well as programmatic approaches such as education and enforcement.

Consensus is mandatory for achieving large-scale reductions in serious traffic crashes and fatalities. Change can only be achieved with the cooperation of a diverse set of stakeholders, including the public, government officials, the private sector, educators,



and law enforcement. The broad list of stakeholders to be engaged in this task force will be a first step towards developing consensus on our approach.

Through examination of crash data, some leading causes of serious and fatal crashes in the Portland Metropolitan area are alcohol and drug use, followed by speeding and aggressive driving. Many dangerous driving behaviors can be prevented with simple changes to street design. Adding complexity to the streetscape such as tree-lined medians, bike lanes, pedestrian islands, and curb extensions, forces drivers to slow down and pay attention.

In our opinion, a road's design significantly impacts its relative safety. Wide, flat, and open (or "over-built") roads encourage speeding and have been shown to be the most dangerous. In urban environments, roads should not be designed in a way that encourages driving speeds of 30 mph or greater, due to the increased likelihood of pedestrian death upon impact.

In addition to consensus being a mandatory element to achieving success under vision zero policy, it is clear that Oregon needs to invest significant new resources into transportation improvement projects that enhance safety through roadway design. It will be critical to pass a transportation package that funds all modes of transportation.

Please support HB 2736-2 to establish The Task Force on Vision Zero: Achieving Zero Traffic Crashes, Injuries and Fatalities.

Sincerely,



Gerik Kransky
Advocacy Director

