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June 1, 2015

Oregon Legislature  
House Committee Transportation and Economic Development  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair McKeown and Members of the Committee,

Oregon needs a robust, multi-modal Connect Oregon program.

I would like to express my strong support for HB 2274 and the Connect Oregon program. Connect Oregon has proven to be successful in supporting Oregon's economy by investing in a broad range of transportation infrastructure projects which are not eligible for funding from the gas tax, but support economic development and access to jobs. This program should be funded at a robust level and maintain its current breadth of eligible projects, including bicycle and pedestrian projects.

There is a strong demand for Connect Oregon projects. Last year, applicants requested almost \$125 million in funding for projects to improve Oregon's economy, out of \$42 million in available funds. Each application was evaluated for its economic impact and its priority for the region and mode of transportation.

- The City of Tualatin was given funding for its Tualatin River Greenway Trail Gap Completion Project connecting residential, commercial, and public facilities;
- Tri-Met was awarded funding for the Westside Bike & Ride Project, which includes improved bike parking and access at multiple west-side MAX stations. This helps address a last-mile transit connection for employees commuting to Nike and other businesses, while relieving crowding on MAX trains.
- Lane Transit District was awarded funding for new pedestrian and bicycle bridge connections on West 11<sup>th</sup> to improve transit access for people living and working in the Eugene area, a key connection between home and work.

Many critical projects did not receive funding in the last round of Connect Oregon, but would also provide key connections for Oregon's economy. One such project is the Tigard Street Trail, which would connect Tigard's residential workforce to local and regional employment centers. The project would provide a safe connection to transit and is matched a \$5.2 million local investment in the street system.

Other projects that fell just below the cut-off line last year include the City of Redmond's Homestead Canal Trail, the City of Brooking's trail to Harris Beach State Park, the Salmonberry Corridor trail between Barview and Garibaldi, and the City of Wilsonville's I-5 Bike/Pedestrian Bridge.



These are just a few of the many fantastic non-roadway projects that remain unfunded, and that cannot be funded using gas tax dollars. They all provide critical connections in the transportation system that break down barriers to accessing employment centers, shopping, and medical services. They serve the approximately 30% of the public that doesn't drive, they help our communities attract the best and the brightest of our younger workforce, many of whom enjoy pedaling to their jobs, and they provide an efficient and cost-effective solution to the demands on our street network. Plus, these projects are critical elements of a transportation system that also promote healthy communities.

These projects Connect Oregon.

The Oregon Legislature should support robust funding and continued broad eligibility for ConnectOregon VI (HB 2274) as part of their efforts to improve Oregon's transportation system for all Oregonians. It's the smart thing to do to grow our economy and our transportation options across the entire state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerik Kransky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Gerik Kransky  
Advocacy Director

