



February 3, 2016

To: House Committee on Transportation and Economic Development  
Representative Caddy McKeown, Chair  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem OR 97301

From: Commute Options  
50 SW Bond Street #4  
Bend OR 97702

**RE: Support for HB 4078 and Rural Transit Funding**

To Chair McKeown and Members of the Committee:

Commute Options is a non-profit agency promoting Transportation Options in 14 rural and frontier Oregon counties. This letter serves to sign-on in support of HB 4078 to create stable public transit funding and improve service in rural areas of the state.

We are partnered with our local transit agency, Cascades East Transit, in Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties. Many employees, students and families in our region have difficulty traveling between the cities in the region because bus service is limited. Some individuals seeking medical services go untreated because of lack of transportation. Students seeking opportunities to attend college are sometimes unable to access classes in their communities. These issues are just as prevalent in more rural communities, like Pendleton, Ontario, and Lakeview, as they are in the urban areas of our state.

According to Census and public health data, one-third of Oregonians do not drive a car. Due to their age, ability or financial status, many of these community members do not even own a car. HB 4078 seeks to stabilize and expand public transit throughout rural Oregon, essentially expanding opportunities to those non-drivers in our state. Commute Options is in full support of this effort.

Please add our agency to the list of those supporting the expansion of transit funding in our rural communities. And we ask for your support of HB 4078.

Thank you for your consideration,

**Jeff Monson**, Executive Director, Commute Options