



February 2, 2016

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Salem Area Chamber of Commerce
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salemchamber.org

To: Chair McKeown and Members, House Transportation and Economic Development
From: Salem Area Chamber of Commerce
Re: HB 4078 – Transit Funding

Chair McKeown and Members,

The Salem Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to take a leadership role in the creation and advocacy of HB4078.

The Salem Chamber of Commerce supports public transportation, and understands how robust and effective transit systems benefit communities. The Chamber's opposition to the recent local ballot measure was in no way an indictment of public transportation. Rather, the effort served to protect the business community from yet another additional expense, and to clarify the need for a more equitable solution to a systemic funding need.

Many of Oregon's small rural, urban and smaller metropolitan transit services, while critical to the transportation needs of the state and its citizens, are largely underfunded when compared to the geographic areas they serve. Many providers face operational challenges and struggle to maintain services at current funding levels, resulting in underserved communities at the expense of employers, workers, seniors and disabled, and students among others.

HB4078 will help eliminate these operational and service challenges by providing a stable grant funding source for Oregon's smaller rural and small urban public transportation providers. These grants would provide much needed operational and / or expansion funds, and help providers realize their maximum federal funding by increasing the local or state funding required to do so.

Adequate funding of transit services will allow for operation and expansion as necessary to meet the needs of a growing and aging population. By investing in public transportation funding, The State of Oregon will be creating social and economic benefits by connecting employers and employees, consumers and businesses, students and schools, and those with special or unique transportation needs with the services they need.

Please join us in support of HB4078.

Sincerely,

Dan Clem
CEO, Salem Area Chamber of Commerce