

From: Jessica Engelman
To: [HTP Exhibits](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of HB2682
Date: Tuesday, April 11, 2017 11:21:42 AM

To the House Committee On Transportation Policy,

I am a Portland resident who is extremely concerned about our ever-increasing traffic violence. Both at the state and city levels, 2016 recorded more traffic fatalities than we've seen in years. Portland's City Council and Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) have both demonstrated concern and determination to reverse this trend and strive toward the goals outlined by our Vision Zero pledge. Unfortunately, while other American cities such as New York and Seattle have implemented city-wide speed limit reductions to address the number one factor in whether a crash will result in a fatality or serious injury, we in Portland do not have this ability, as we are at the mercy of ODOT when setting speed limits, even on streets under PBOT jurisdiction.

While Portland may not be as large as New York or Seattle, our transportation planners and engineers are top-notch. Portland is known nation-wide for its innovations in transportation and general urban transportation know-how. There is no reason why PBOT cannot be trusted with authority over speed limits within city boundaries. ODOT, on the other hand, has repeatedly demonstrated disinterest in safety issues, particularly of vulnerable road users (those walking and cycling). When asked to conduct a speed study on Powell Blvd--one of the most dangerous roads in all of Oregon--ODOT threatened local residents with an *increase* in the speed limit. I do not use the word "threatened" lightly. In just the past few years there have been many instances of what can only be described as intimidation tactics by ODOT for the purpose of dismissing the needs and concerns of the people of Portland. Until major changes are made at the upper administrative levels to reset the values and priorities of the organization, ODOT is the transportation department that should not be trusted with setting speed limits in urban environments, not PBOT.

The original spirit of HB2682 is admirable. It is the local jurisdictions that best understand and are most concerned with how our roads are designed, designated, and operated. I understand that smaller towns in Oregon do not want the responsibility of signing their roads, which is understandable. However, please allow Portland, and its fully qualified transportation bureau, to be the exception. The proposed amendment that would limit PBOT's speed limit authority to only residential roads is extremely disappointing. Portland has designated a "high-crash network" of our most deadly roads. These are all arterial streets, and as such would continue to reside outside the purview of PBOT when it comes to speed limits. In other words, under the amendment, ODOT would continue to have final say regarding the speed limit on our roads most in need of a speed limit reduction.

HB2682 in its original form would have allowed for a dramatic reduction in the time and resources necessary to amend speed limits on Portland streets. Please consider a new amendment that would give Portland full authority to designate the speed limit on PBOT-jurisdiction arterial roads as well as residential roads.

Sincerely,

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