

PBOT

PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION

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Dan Saltzman Commissioner **Leah Treat** Director

April 12, 2017

Representative Caddy McKeown, Chair
House Transportation Policy Committee
900 Court Street NE, HR D
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 3230

Dear Chair McKeown and Members of the House Committee on Transportation Policy:

The City of Portland strongly supports HB 3230 and robust investments in the Safe Routes to School Fund.

Portland Safe Routes to School makes walking, biking and accessing transit to get to school convenient, safe and healthy for students and families while reducing congestion around schools. A partnership between the City of Portland, schools, neighborhoods, community organizations and agencies, Portland's Safe Routes program continues to increase safety and improve health for students and their families. In terms of meeting the traffic safety goal of Vision Zero, the City of Portland prioritizes protecting the most vulnerable users of the system—children travelling to school.

Since starting in 2005, the City of Portland's Safe Routes to School encouragement program has expanded from 8 initial partner schools to over 100 partner schools across 5 school districts. The Safe Routes to School program has increased walking and biking in participating Portland schools by 35% since 2006. However, there is much more work to be done. The participation of parents and teachers in Title 1 schools is lagging behind. These schools require more staff time and a bilingual, multi-cultural approach. Title 1 schools are also often located on or near the City of Portland's most dangerous roads, furthering the need for more infrastructure improvements so kids can safely walk to school. The funding allocated in HB 3230 would help close this gap.

The financial needs for safety improvements near schools is great. When Portland passed a gas tax, called "Fixing Our Streets," \$8 million dollars was allocated for the five school districts in Portland: David Douglas, Centennial, Riverdale, Parkrose, and Portland Public Schools.

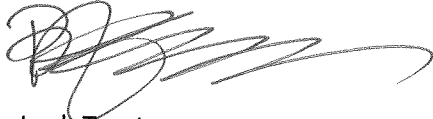


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However, the \$8 million raised locally by Portland is a mere drop in the bucket compared to the overall needs. Portland estimates that the overall infrastructure needs in Portland for Safe Routes to School is closer to \$100 or \$150 million. As part of Fixing Our Streets, Portland is currently conducting Safe Routes to School Open Houses and other outreach activities to conduct needs assessment around schools and we will develop a detailed project list by fall of 2017.

The City of Portland is supportive of HB 3230 as a step in the right direction. We agree with the overall approach of the bill and encourage more funding for Safe Routes to Schools.

Sincerely,



Leah Treat



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