

Good morning, Chair McKeown and Committee Members. My name is Shane MacRhodes. My address is 250 E. 36th Ave. in Eugene. I am here as a member of the For Every Kid Coalition, an advocate for healthier transportation options, and as a Dad to two 6 year old boys and a soon to be 8 year old daughter. I am here to support House Bill 3230 and to encourage you to send the bill onto the Ways and Means Committee with a recommendation to pass.

In 1970 Eugene formed our first "Bicycle Committee" made of city staff and community members focused on guiding the city towards creating safer bikeways. In 1971 Oregon passed one of the nation's first "Bike Bills" dedicating 1% of the state highway fund received by the ODOT to be dedicated to what we now call "active transportation" projects. And in 1972 I was born in Eugene. The city quickly grew and as the orchards surrounding my grandparents home filled with more houses and roadways the city also added sidewalks, bike lanes and a great river path system that helped create one of the best places in the US to move around by bicycle. However, after decades of outpaced spending for automobile mobility we, like most communities around the state and the country, saw walking and biking as a more challenging option for many.

When my wife and I were married we wanted to take a journey around our country to see if Oregon was the right place for us to settle so we took a year-long bike tour, circumnavigating 11,500 miles around our amazing country before finally settling back in Eugene.

We settled there because of the great choices we had; in schools, in healthy sustainable foods, in rich cultural experiences, and in the potential for transportation options.

Our daughter was born in 2009, just a year after our local Safe Routes to School Program was created. Since then we've seen our community working hard to make those transportation options better for kids and families again. We know so many parents who want to walk, bike, and bus more but find it difficult because of how certain parts of our cities are built. We make it easy for them to choose to drive but we make it much harder to choose the healthier, sustainable, and dare I say more FUN way to move around our city.

To help we started a monthly family friendly bike ride called Kidical Mass and now we have hundreds of families join us throughout the year to ride through the city enjoying the power of more family bikes on the streets. Kids and parents feel empowered and encouraged and they want to ride more but they often tell us that in their neighborhood or near their school they have too many barriers to get where they need to go so don't feel safe biking on their own.

These families deserve safer and healthier transportation options and the Safe Routes to School program can help cities and communities throughout Oregon get there. When there was dedicated SRTS funding we were seeing great projects and programs happening. Now without it we're seeing fewer of these projects. The dedicated funding in this bill would help create real positive change for not only my children but thousands of families throughout Oregon and I encourage you to send HB 3230 to the Ways and Means Committee with a major show of support.