



*Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation*

**May 19, 2017**

**Testimony re SB 5530 to Joint Subcommittee on Capital Construction**

**Rob Zako, Executive Director**

Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST) supports allocating lottery bonds to Lane Transit District (LTD) to match federal funding to invest in EmX bus rapid transit (BRT) and related improvements.

BEST includes community leaders representing business, social services, schools, environmental groups, neighborhoods, and people of faith.

The Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area is the second largest in the state. Although it is expected to grow by 50,000 people over the next 20 years, only one major roadway expansion project is planned over that time—even assuming the state transportation funding package is passed. To meet the needs of the future, it is essential to invest in transit.

Investing to expand EmX is urgent in advance of the 2021 World Track and Field Championships, when the University of Oregon will host the world.

Finally, investing in transit is critical to creating jobs and promoting economic development. Higher-wage employers look to locate in communities that provide good transportation options. Indeed, business leaders in the Research Triangle area of North Carolina have made the best video about the economic benefits of LTD's EmX because they recognize it is an investment in the economy. (See link.)

Please support lottery bond funding to enable LTD to compete successfully for federal transit funding to invest in the Eugene-Springfield economy.

For BEST,

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Link: Regional Transportation Alliance—Bus Rapid Transit in the Pacific Northwest: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeHO6ngFPss>

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BEST's mission is to promote a thriving, equitable, and sustainable Eugene-Springfield area with a world-class network of safe, practical, and affordable options for people to ride the bus, bicycle, and walk. BEST pursues this mission by educating the public, convening community leaders, helping forge consensus, and advocating in the public interest.

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