



# Wellness and Education Board of Central Oregon (WEBCO)

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June 6, 2017

Chair and Vice Chair of Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue  
900 Court Street NE, Room 431  
Salem Oregon, 97301

RE: Support for HB2745B – Transit Funding

Dear Members of the Committee:

As the Director of an intergovernmental health and early education organization representing Central Oregon, I am writing today to urge you to support the bill currently before the legislature, HB 2745B, which will give voters in Central Oregon a choice on whether their areas should fund a public transit system.

Our organization is keenly aware that accessible transportation is a significant determinant of health and well-being for our residents, especially in Central Oregon with smaller communities and rural areas. Our work in the region has identified transportation as a large impediment to access to needed services – especially for the elderly and economically disadvantaged residents.

As a health care economist, I can personally attest that cost-effective and available access to services is the most efficient approach to using our scarce public resources wisely. Furthermore, in the absence of such transportation and accompanying access, there is a much greater likelihood that individuals will not seek preventive care services at the optimal time. This delay in seeking health care services causes great likelihood of hospitalization and other costly interventions – much of it at taxpayer expense.

Accordingly, I strongly support strategies, such as HB2745B that increase the chances that communities will act in their self-interest in accordance with their transportation needs (rural or urban). We strongly support the notion of local control in such critical matters and are aware that this bill benefits our Central Oregon communities by providing such opportunities to express their needs.

Lastly, we can maximize the efficiency by retaining our strong regional management for the transit system, thus minimizing the costs, and optimizing streamlined, coordinated, and efficient services that are responsible to each community. Accordingly, I ask that you strongly encourage the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue to move HB2745B forward and support its passage this session.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours

  
Lionel K. Chadwick, MPH, PhD, FACHE  
Director