

Central
Oregon



Coalition
for
Access

June 5, 2017

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
Senator Mark Hass, Chair
Senator Brian Boquist, Vice-Chair
900 Court Street NE, Room 354
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 2745B

Chair Hass, Vice-Chair Boquist, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today on behalf of the Central Oregon Coalition for Access and its Steering Committee members to urge you to support the bill currently before the legislature, HB 2745, which will give voters in Central Oregon a choice on whether their areas should fund a public transit system.

It is critical for many in the community to have access to transit service, and for that service to be provided at a meaningful level which makes transit a reliable resource for the public. When routes do not cover important areas, or hours of operation are too limited, many in our community do not have access to jobs, appointments, errands, civic activities and more. In order for transit to satisfy these needs, they need access to a stream of funding.

HB 2745B offers a number of benefits to our Central Oregon Communities. It gives them local control -- each city can choose the appropriate level of service, funding amount, and tool for funding transit in their community. It maximizes efficiency, by retaining regional management for the transit system, minimizing costs and optimizing streamlined and convenient service. It drives economic development, helping local companies attract workers by giving employees a public transportation option that saves time and money. Some communities may choose to ask voters to support funding initiatives, and other communities may not be ready any time soon. Giving Central Oregon communities the option to seek transit funding from voters is important to our region.

We ask the Senate Finance and Revenue Committee to support the passage of HB 2745B this session. Thank you for giving local control of future transit initiatives into the hands of Central Oregon voters.

Respectfully,

Carol Fulkerson
COCA Steering Committee member
Bend, Oregon