



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 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.

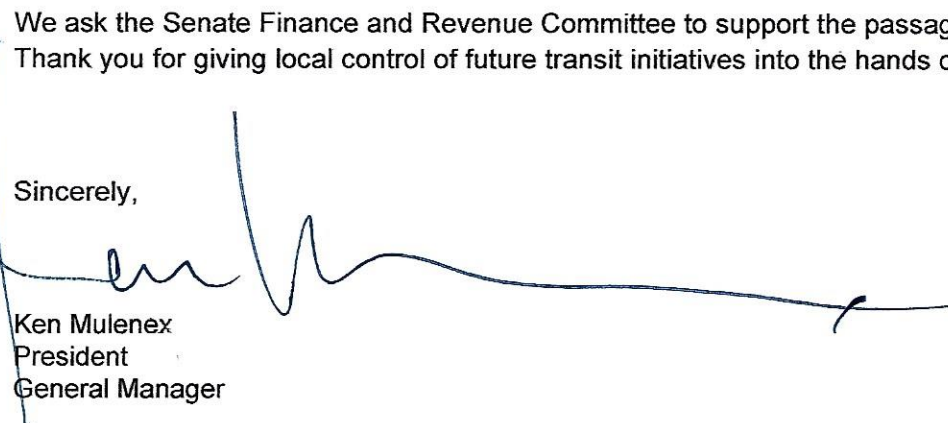
As President of The Newberry Eagle, greater La Pine's Community newspaper, we see tremendous future growth in the rural areas south of Bend, especially La Pine. We recognize the limits of federal and state transit grant funding. We need the changes to ORS 190 that are contained in HB 2745B that will allow us to implement a level of transit service through the will of the voters when the time is right.

As La Pine's Mayor (now retired) these past 6 years, I have seen the surge in growth of transit needs to and from the greater La Pine Community.

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.

Sincerely,


Ken Mullenex
President
General Manager

**Board of
Directors**

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