

From the desk of
John Huffman
Rep. John Huffman

May 30, 2017

Oregon House of Representatives
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for House Bill 2745 B

Madame Speaker and Members of the Oregon House of Representatives:

House Bill 2745 B comes to you unopposed and with multiple do-pass recommendations from the House Committee on Transportation Policy and the House Committee on Revenue. It represents an innovative governance model for providing regional transit in rural Oregon.

House Bill 2745 B would allow the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council, which provides transit service within Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson Counties, with the support of affected local governments and local voters, to levy property taxes for transit services tailored to the needs of each community.

All Central Oregon cities (Bend, Culver, La Pine, Madras, Metolius, Prineville, Redmond, and Sisters) support this proposal as it protects their local control. Communities that want to pursue property tax levies for transit may do so on their own timeframes and for their desired level of service and funding. Communities that don't wish to pursue funding are under no obligation to do so.

The currently available tools, namely a region-wide transit district or small individual transit districts, don't offer the ability to develop a highly-integrated regional transit system that meets the needs of so many diverse communities across such a large and interconnected area. A region-wide transit district offers little local control. A transit district for each community risks a fragmented and un-unified approach. HB 2745 B can meet both needs and also avoid additional bureaucracy by building on an existing and efficient system.

HB 2745 B has received over forty letters of support from cities, counties, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, transit advocates, riders, neighborhood associations, and other interests. It is also supported by statewide transit advocates including the diverse membership of the Oregon Transit Association.

House Bill 2745 B took years of hard work to develop and represents a community-driven solution to addressing clearly-identified community needs. We urge your strong support.



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