



May 10, 2019

To: Joint Committee on Transportation

RE: Support HB 2846, the Safe Community Highways Act

Dear Co-Chair Beyer, Co-Chair McKeown, and Members of the Joint Transportation Committee,

The Safe Routes Partnership, working in Oregon via the Pacific Northwest Regional Network, strongly supports HB 2846, the Safe Community Highways Act.

In our communities, we are deeply concerned because existing state highways that act like city streets or county roads are not being prioritized for maintenance, and are neglected. An integral part of a thriving community is safe, accessible streets and sidewalks. Many of these state highways intersect neighborhoods and communities, and have become barriers for youth, people with disabilities, and older adults to get to the places they need to go – schools, transit stops, grocery stores, or to worship. As our tragically increasing pedestrian crash and fatality rate in Oregon suggests, because of the way these state highways have been managed, or neglected, people that travel along and across them literally put their lives on the line when they walk out the door.

We need to allow communities and local agencies to decide how these neglected and dangerous community highways are maintained and designed. Through passage of this Act, local communities can correctly prioritize the safety and maintenance needs of these important roadways.

Passing Safe Community Highways for All Oregonians will allow locals throughout Oregon to assume control of candidate highways through jurisdictional transfer. This legislation solves the problem of individual communities legislating for jurisdictional transfer on their own, and allows all communities in Oregon with candidate highways to work together to develop strategies for jurisdictional transfer.

We support HB 2846, and we encourage this committee to pass it. Thank you for your work to ensure Oregon is a safe place for kids to live, play, travel, and thrive.

Yours sincerely,

Kari Schlosshauer

Pacific Northwest Senior Policy Manager

Safe Routes Partnership