



May 17, 2019

Joint Committee on Transportation
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Testimony regarding HB 2592 and Connect Oregon funding for bike and pedestrian trails

Dear Joint Committee on Transportation:

The Oregon Trails Coalition is a coalition of broad-based, statewide trail interests dedicated to supporting, promoting, and advocating for the preservation, development, and stewardship of a statewide network of sustainable, world class trails that provide access to outdoor recreation and active transportation for all.

Our advisory board includes representatives from more than twenty-five federal, state, and local agencies, trail user groups, outdoor industry partners, and volunteer organizations.

As you know, Connect Oregon is one of the precious few sources of state funding for transportation infrastructure outside of the state highway right of way. Connect Oregon's Pedestrian and Bicycle program provides crucial funding for off-street paths and bike and pedestrian bridges that complete major gaps in Oregon communities' transportation system plans. Such paths and bridges provide critical connections and safe corridors for youth getting to school, families walking and biking in their neighborhoods, commuters getting to and from work, and those visiting our communities to experience Oregon on foot or by bike. Because of Oregon's constitutional restriction on gas tax funding, these transportation projects of great value to our communities are extremely difficult to fund.

Past rounds of Connect Oregon have provided critical funding for bike-pedestrian trails and bridge connections like Redmond's Homestead Canal Trail, Eugene's Commerce Street Connector, Milwaukie's Kronberg Trail, and the Tualatin River Greenway Trail.

Keep Oregon Moving (HB 2017) dedicated 7% of Connect Oregon funding for bike and pedestrian trails. In rounds previous to HB 2017, bike and pedestrian projects in Connect Oregon were receiving 15-16% of overall program funding through the multi-modal competitive grant process.

We hope the Committee will preserve the very modest promise in HB 2017 of Connect Oregon funding for trails. As trail users, land managers, and people who care about the health and safety of Oregonians and the vitality of Oregon communities, we believe trail investments are some of the most valuable transportation investments we can make.



Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Noll". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" and "N".

Stephanie Noll,
Coalition Director,
Oregon Trails Coalition
PO Box 14814
Portland, OR 97293