



CITY OF West Linn

**Testimony by City of West Linn Mayor Russ Axelrod Supporting HB 4103
Proposed Legislation Allows Communities to Set Speed Limits on Local Roads
Scheduled Public Hearing on February 4, 2020, before the Joint Committee on Transportation**

February 4, 2020

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and McKeown, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the City of West Linn, I am testifying in support of HB 4103, which permits Oregon communities to set speed limits on local roads under certain conditions set by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

In 2017, the City of Portland received local speed setting authority from the legislature to reduce residential speeds from 25 to 20 mph. Other cities would appreciate the opportunity to provide safer roadways on those occasions when local leaders deem it appropriate based on local knowledge and conditions. Managing speed limits is critical to our goal of achieving safer streets and neighborhoods, including the complex interactions of people moving by multiple modes.

We have concerns about vehicle speeds on our local neighborhood streets and arterials. We have many schools on arterial roadways with unsafe traffic speeds. This is a major barrier to students' ability to walk or roll to school and other destinations, and it threatens safe street crossings. For these reasons, the lowering of speed limits tops the list in School Action Plans across the state. We also have unsafe traffic impacting our neighborhoods from diverted traffic from dysfunctional ODOT Highways 43 and I-205 not under local control – this is a serious deteriorating condition for our community.

Delegating local speed setting authority to cities will allow for speeds to be set more quickly, efficiently and consistently across street types. In 2018, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found that "lowering the speed limit in urban areas is an effective countermeasure to reduce speeds and improve safety for all road users." Slower speeds reduce both the number of crashes and the severity of crashes. At slower speeds, people driving can stop more quickly, avoiding a crash altogether, and when a collision does occur, there is less of a chance of death or serious injury.

The City of West Linn respectfully urges a DO PASS vote on HB 4103!

Sincerely,

Russ Axelrod

Mayor

City of West Linn