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March 4, 2021

**RE: 1000 Friends Supports SB 395**

Dear Chairs Beyer and McLain, members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 395. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice.

**1000 Friends supports SB 395**, or the Safe Routes for All Bill, which would create new funding opportunities for biking and active transportation projects, and funding for pedestrian and safety projects across the entire state.

Oregon's land use system and planning goals, in place since the 1970s, help us identify the importance of this bill, and why investing in bike and pedestrian projects across the state is critical. Oregon's Land Use and Planning Goal 12 regarding transportation highlights 9 specific points of consideration for how the state should develop its transportation system, several relevant ones include: consider all modes of transportation including mass transit, air, water, pipeline, rail, highway, bicycle and pedestrian; avoid principal reliance upon any one mode of transportation; minimize adverse social, economic and environmental impacts and costs; conserve energy; meet the needs of the transportation disadvantaged by improving transportation services; and others.

If a public budget shows priorities, active transportation and pedestrian safety are not a priority for the state-- currently making up just 1% of all transportation investments made by the state, despite walking trips making up 10% of all trips Oregonians make.<sup>1</sup> In places like Redmond<sup>2</sup>, Forest Grove<sup>3</sup>, Brookings<sup>4</sup>, and Portland<sup>5</sup> pedestrians continue to face unsafe roadway and urban designs that inherently cause folks to risk their lives to get to the places they need to go.

Ensuring that we begin prioritize non-automotive investments is a critical equity issue for those that are transportation disadvantaged,<sup>6</sup> and for Oregon's Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian American Pacific Islander, and other communities of color. These communities are disproportionately more likely to be transportation disadvantaged, and therefore are more likely to use walking, active transportation, and transit as their primary forms of transportation.<sup>7</sup> This means that the critical underfunding of pedestrian and active

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<sup>1</sup> ODOT 2019, Page 8, [Personal travel in Oregon](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Redmond woman struck, killed by vehicle in Tetherow Crossing](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Tualatin Valley Highway 'not a safe place' a key cog in Metro's push for transportation measure](#)

<sup>4</sup> [OSP: Brookings woman dies following crash on Highway 101](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Four people dead in 3 days as Portland car violence continues - BikePortland.org](#)

<sup>6</sup> DLCD, [Goal 12](#), Transportation Disadvantaged -- refers to those individuals who have difficulty in obtaining transportation because of their age, income, physical or mental disability.

<sup>7</sup> [You are here: A snapshot of how the Portland region gets around](#)



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transportation in the state continues to harm those that already face a multitude of other systemic racial challenges.

Likewise, from a land use perspective, having safe, walkable, and connected communities are critical in making them livable, affordable, and sustainable. Lacking committed resources for multimodal projects, communities will then invest in roadways, expand, and become less walkable and connected, increasing community dependency on cars, increasing development and transportation costs for both community members and local governments in a vicious cycle of sprawl. Creating abundant and dense missing middle housing across the entire state connected by transit and safe pedestrian options help create communities better able to support vulnerable groups such as aging populations (which exist and are growing in nearly every town and city in Oregon), and make it easier for everyone to get to schools, places of worship, community centers, and other places of interest. These communities are also more resilient to climate disasters, such as wildfires, where close access to critical services and mutual aid combined with compact and easily fire defensible communities are critical as communities are both rebuilt and continue to grow.

Unlocking more funds for local jurisdictions to prioritize these types of projects is critical to help them match local dollars for larger and long needed projects. We also know that multimodal transportation projects have a greater positive economic benefit than roadway construction and other auto-centric uses of transportation investments: creating more jobs, and creating more positive externalities for local communities in which the projects are occurring, yet another reason to prioritize this spending in our recovering economy.<sup>8</sup>

SB 395 helps create a more balanced transportation system for Oregon, helps begin to address some of the funding inequities that disproportionately harm Oregon's Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian American Pacific Islander, and other communities of color and those that are transportation disadvantaged, and advances better transportation land use outcomes for Oregon.

We strongly encourage referral of this bill out of the Joint Committee on Transportation.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Morgan", followed by a horizontal line.

Brett Morgan  
Metro Regional Advocacy Manager  
1000 Friends of Oregon

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<sup>8</sup> [Smart transportation spending creates jobs, grows the economy](#)