

Members of the Joint Transportation Committee,

I know you're getting a lot of form letters from people supporting this bill. I hope you won't discount them just because they're using a prewritten text -- support for the Safe Routes for All Act (SB 395) is strong here in Multnomah County. Let's build on the legacy of the Bike Bill and move a little faster than ODOT's estimation of 150 years to complete the walking and biking master plans.

To do that, of course, we need funding. Please pass SB 395 and let's build safer streets for all.

Right now, my family is surrounded by "stroads" in Portland -- streets that are designed and being used as mini-highways. Often four, five or even more lanes, these thoroughfares are difficult and dangerous to cross (regardless of how you're doing so). Interstates and state highways exist in Multnomah County, but far too many neighborhood streets are doing double-duty as cut-through alternatives to these designated freeways. And as so much research has shown, designing streets that can be traversed at high speeds encourages drivers to use them that way, so this isn't a matter of striping crosswalks or bike lanes and calling it good. These streets need to be calmed through physical infrastructure -- medians, curb bumpouts/bulbs, protected bike lanes, diverters, pedestrian-activated crossing lights, priority for transit (like Rose Lanes) -- but we know local and state agencies aren't going to take on that kind of work unless they have funding.

Yet people continue to die preventable deaths from interactions with drivers who are, frankly, using these stroads as they were designed -- hostile places for anyone not in a vehicle. It's time to reconfigure these streets as safe places for everyone in our community, no matter how they're traveling.

You know, from the other letters you're receiving, what SB 395 provides for and why Safe Routes for All has clear benefits for our communities. But the most important take-away is this: People are dying on our streets in ways that would be easily prevented by changed physical street design. This is a crisis, and 1% of state highway funds is no longer going to cut it. The Safe Routes for All Act needs to be passed. Please vote in favor.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Ivan Boothe