

Hello Civil Law Subcommittee, my name is Micah, I am a 22-year-old transit-dependent service worker, and I am writing on behalf of SunrisePDX in support of this bill. Especially in a time where transit dependence and a move away from fossil fuel infrastructure are crucial to riders, we should be making public systems available for more of the public. Portland has some of the worst air quality in the United States (4th major city in the nation according to the Department of Environmental Quality), one of the most violent police forces, and one of the largest per-capita amount of white people. These things come together to make a perfect storm for this bill. This bill has the intention to protect the constitutional rights of riders, prevent racial profiling, prevent the over-criminalization and policing of low-income communities, and focus public safety resources on public safety. If police officers continue to have the power to enter people into the legal system for skipping a \$2.50 payment, they will continue to do so disproportionately to Black and Brown community members, and discourage the everyday person, who may not have 2.50, from taking transit at all. Erik Van Hagen, TriMet's legal services director, told the House Judiciary Committee on March 30, 2019 that "TriMet does not consider fare evasion to be a criminal offense ... and there are multiple ways for offenders to resolve citations without going to court." "Focusing public safety resources on public safety" means lowering the likelihood that someone will enter the prison system based on something menial. Additionally, this means taking concrete steps to making public transit safer and more available, which is what this bill does in its task to prohibit police officers from acting as fare enforcement. Together, let's decriminalize our transportation system, so we can have a more livable future for all people. Thank you.