

Dear Chair Power, Vice-Chair Wallan, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Civil Law,

My name is Gabriela Saldaña-López and I am the Bus Riders Unite community organizer at OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon. I am here in support of the passage of HB 2482. Over the past year and a half in my professional capacity, I have heard several stories talking about how police officers use fare inspections to target and harm community members - especially community members who are Black, Indigenous, and or people of color.

For example, there are instances where police officers block passenger doors or use K-9 units in order to further intimate passengers while assisting in a fare inspection. There are also stories where police use fare inspection as a way to further search individuals. There are stories about police officers “assisting” in a fare inspection that leads to longer interaction with law enforcement. Not only is this violating transit riders’ constitutional rights but further alienates Oregonians who need public transportation the most.

We all deserve to feel safe and feel that we are welcomed in our transit system. OPAL is very glad to see that TriMet is starting to listen to the community and that they are taking steps to address community-based safety models. We look forward to continuing to work with TriMet in these efforts. Although TriMet has recently worked on different models for safety, this bill is not about those models and specifically addresses law enforcement. This bill in no way prevents law enforcement from being present on the transit system or for them to conduct their duties in the interest of public safety. What this bill **will** do is help diminish racial and class profiling that contributes to the over-policing of low-income and BIPOC communities.

TriMet has stated on multiple occasions that police will not conduct fare inspections and this bill will further align that statement with a concrete action. Ensuring that HB 2482 moves forward is the next step for us to take in order to support our communities. I urge this committee to move forward in passing this bill to ensure that law enforcement profiling and over-policing are in check and that we can move closer to public transit systems that are safe and welcoming to all.

Sincerely,

Gabriela Saldana-Lopez
She/Her/Hers
Bus Riders Unite Community Organizer
OPAL Environmental Justice