

Joint Committee on Transportation Roadshow: June 4th

Dear Committee Chairs Gorsek and McLain and members of the Committee,

My name is Bethany Harvey and I live in Montavilla in NE Portland. I am a public health nurse working in the community, a regular bike commuter, and lead for the Green Team of Vestal Elementary School on NE 82nd Ave, where my children attend school.

The majority of Vestal's students have to cross at least one wide, high speed road; 82nd Ave, Burnside, NE Glisan, and/or NE Halsey. Our school community must cross these high crash network streets to access school each day, and we regularly witness high traffic volumes and dangerous driver behavior in the immediate blocks surrounding our school. The highlight of my week each week is co-leading the Vestal Bike Bus, where my kids ride bikes with their friends and we all cross Glisan together listening to upbeat music! The reality is, though, there are many families that do not join us due to safety concerns of NE Glisan.

We in Oregon require our kids to walk/roll to school if they live within a mile of school, yet not all students have a safe route. The Safe Routes to School Infrastructure fund is great--\$15 million per year--but every year requests for funds are tens of millions more than are available. **Please shift funds into the SRTS infrastructure fund so that any city that wants to complete routes to their schools has the resources to do it.**

Thanks to the Oregon legislature, tens of millions of dollars are flowing into 82nd Avenue so that kids in our neighborhood can walk/roll to school more safely. In the past year in our neighborhood, we have seen other improvements including the addition of bike lanes and car lane narrowing on NE Halsey and improvements to the 70's Greenway. We are lucky! But **walking/rolling to school safely is something that every child in Oregon deserves.**

I understand you are facing a massive budget shortfall and a lot of financial pressure of mega projects on our freeway system. I hope in making decisions about tradeoffs, you will prioritize communities living near high crash network streets and invest in the Great Streets and Safe Routes to Schools. Please use transportation funds in ways that are accountable to our statewide plans and goals and **promote transportation choices that will improve our health, our climate, safety, and local economies.** Please help stop the surge in traffic deaths by making main streets safe to walk, bike, and roll for all.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Bethany Harvey, MPH, BSN