

Oral Testimony to Joint on Transportation Planning on June 4, 2024

Members of the committee, my name is Brian Ettlting. I live in outer northeast Portland. For 25 years, I worked as a seasonal park ranger at Crater Lake National Park, Oregon. Crater Lake is far from major cities or industrial areas, so it has some of the cleanest air in the U.S.

Sadly, I saw climate change at Crater Lake more intense wildfire seasons. The wildfire smoke was hazardous to breathe and forced visitors with health issues to cancel their vacations. Scientists tell us the largest source of climate change pollution in the U.S. and Oregon is transportation caused by vehicle tailpipe emissions from burning gasoline and diesel.

In 2017, I quit my Crater Lake ranger job to be a climate change organizer to reduce that threat and deadly air pollution, the leading cause is transportation. Thus, I urge you to pass a transportation package in 2025 to optimize safety, climate, maintenance, while reducing congestion and air pollution.

Let's invest, not just in roads, but more investment in light rail, bus, and passenger rail transportation to assist the 20% Oregonians who can't drive and can't afford to drive.

As legislators, you know I-5 from Portland to Salem is very congested during rush hour. For your health and sanity and everyone else that gets regularly gridlocked on this commute, please include in the transportation package a bill to establish a task force to study the feasibility of extending the Westside Express Service (WES) commuter rail to Salem. This initiative could create a more connected, efficient, and sustainable transportation system in Oregon.

Improving commuter passenger rail service in Oregon could remove more cars from our roads. This could reduce the maintenance costs for our roads, while providing you, future legislators, and all Oregonians a more peaceful and productive commute from Salem to Portland.

Thank you for your time!

Brian Ettlting

b.green.ettling@gmail.com

15842 NE Sandy Blvd
Apt. 35
Portland, OR 97230

Cell: [314-882-9249](tel:314-882-9249)

"Think Globally, Act Daily." - Brian Ettling