

My name is Nat West, I have lived in Northeast Portland for 22 years and in addition to being a candidate for Portland City Council, I am a Trimet bus driver and daily bike commuter.

Last week while riding my bike and wearing a Trimet-issued yellow safety vest, I was hit by a car. I was traveling in a bike lane on Southeast 7th Avenue near Madison, when a car driver ran into me. I got lucky. I am okay.

But many other cyclists haven't been so lucky, and were killed by car drivers. I am providing this testimony in memory of Jonathan Chase Adams, 31 years old, killed by a driver in Bend Oregon on November 20, 2017.

The circumstances of Jonathan's death closely mirrored my own crash. We were both riding our bikes to work on our regular routes, in broad daylight, and riding in a bike lane when we were hit by a right hook. The bike lanes were unprotected, made solely of paint. We were both probably traveling around 15 miles per hour, passing alongside cars stopped at a red light. The light turned green as we approached the intersection, and the first vehicle in the line turned in front of us. There was only one major difference between our situations.

The vehicle that hit me was a sedan, so the driver could quickly see me due to the low hood height. I got lucky — I suffered no injuries.

But the vehicle that killed Jonathan was a FedEx semi-truck with a 25 foot trailer. He was crushed under the rear wheels and died on the scene. Articulated tractor-trailers routinely use Southeast 7th Avenue, where I was hit last week. I could have been hit by one. It is only luck that allows me to speak to you today.

Your decisions made in the 2025 transportation package can have a strong impact on the possibility of other cyclists getting hit and killed by cars and trucks. Wider freeways won't keep cyclists safe. Protected bike lanes will. I implore you to prioritize funding, including creative ways to raise additional revenue, to increase the safety of vulnerable road users, so that we don't have to rely on just paint and luck to get to work safely.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.