



Hello Joint Transportation Committee, my name is Jordan Lewis, I am a resident of goose hollow in Portland, and thank you for letting the general public speak on this huge transportation bill.

I want to take you back a month to late April. A Union Pacific freight train derailed on the 110-year old Steel Bridge, which I should remind you that every MAX line crosses. The freight train hit a structural support beam, but mercifully not hard enough to cause serious damage to the bridge. This was a near-miss for sure, but keep in mind that the APTA mobility conference and Bus Rodeo were held in Portland that very weekend. Had the train been going just a bit faster, or had one of the derailed oil trains exploded we could have seen our entire MAX network hobbled for over a decade, and we would have been humiliated in front of hundreds of transit planners and operators from around the country. I bring this up because Metro actually studied a solution to this very issue in 2019 – a tunnel under downtown Portland for the MAX. The Get Moving 2020 Measure would have further studied a MAX tunnel, along with countless safety and road projects and even a new MAX line, but tragically the Pandemic derailed that ballot measure and we are still living with the fallout 4 years later, even as foot traffic returns to downtown in droves and our transit system is pushed to its breaking point, as we all saw last weekend. Disaster readiness is far from the only benefit a tunnel would bring; the current steel bridge is a massive bottleneck, limiting each MAX line to only 1 train every 15 minutes. The tunnel would also get the trains off of the street, where they are limited to 15 miles per hour and cars constantly get in the way. Building the tunnel could speed up travel in ANY mode, including driving, between Beaverton and Gresham by 35%

according to the study. This should also result in a 200% increase in MAX ridership, because people will ride transit when it gets them where they want to go on time. You can literally see it in these graphs I prepared—Riders from Hillsboro/Gresham get off en masse once the trains emerge from the West Hills/i-84 and get caught in traffic.

I can already tell what you are thinking—how can we pay for all that? A good first step would be canning the local freeway expansions we literally cant afford! Putting 6 more lanes of freeway through Rose Quarter will cost over 2 Billion dollars once delays and overruns happen; the non-bridge parts of the I5 Bridge replacement will probably cost upwards of 5 billion! Stopping the bleeding is the first step; THEN we have to start building a stable revenue stream as gas taxes and registration fees dwindle. I am a strong believer in the concept of “user pays” for road infrastructure; I will list some ideas:

1. Increased Vehicle-weight-taxes, for small vehicles and large, to account for the fact that road wear increases exponentially with weight.
2. Raise Car Dealer Documentation fees (we have the 5<sup>th</sup> lowest).
3. Increase parking fees where good transit already runs, per the Metro Regional Congestion Pricing Study. A Vehicle-Mile-traveled fee was also considered and I approve of that.
4. Implement an excise tax on new Car Sales. New cars are all SUVs, getting larger and less affordable for regular Oregonians.
5. Increased registration fees. The Federal Highway Administration may be out of date, but as of their most recent data Oregon was well below the national state average for registration fees.