

Hello, my name is Christian Anderson and this is my two cents in the funding for public transit.

Originally I grew up in a small town called Newark in Upstate New York. Now, Upstate is nothing like the concrete jungle of NYC. It is a vast landscape of small towns and farmland in between them. Most people have to commute to their workplace either in the next town or even a few towns over. If someone doesn't have a car, your best hope is to find a place in your town within a reasonable walking distance. But with such small economies, jobs are slim pickings. I was 26 when I finally landed my first job as a pharmacy technician with Wegmans Food Market. It was a lucky break, and I was fortunate to find it.

But unfortunately, in 2023, I was forced to leave my job to take care of my grandmother who had recently moved in with us. Both of my parents are commuters and someone needed to stay home to be able to take care of her. But within the end of the summer, my parents were fortunate to be able to work remotely and I no longer needed to stay home. When I went back to see if I was able to be re-hired to my job, I was told there were no available positions. I was heartbroken, and went on a 3 month long search to find new work. No one was hiring. I had no driver's license, no car, no money for an Uber or a Lyft, no friends who could be a chauffeur, and no public transit.

It was a very rough three months of being ghosted by interviewers, and that was even if someone responded to my application. When I finally decided to make the move out west as it was always my dream to live in the city, and by my best friend's kind heart to let me move in without the fear of rent until I could find a job, I was nervous. I was expecting more of the same. But when I heard of Portland's non-stop bus routes, I was hopeful.

Trimet has been a boon and an absolute necessity for me to get where I am. Getting a job was tough at first, but the fact I was able to just hop on a bus and take the route wherever I needed to go was a relief. I'm now working out of a thrift store on 82nd and being able to take the 14 from Hawthorne to my job and back is nothing short of a godsend.

Please continue funding public transit, as people who are like me who have no other means of transportation rely on it to get to the places we need to be. It is our lifeline to make money and provide for ourselves and our families. Taking it away would only devastate our means of livelihood further.