

Dear Joint Committee on Transportation,

My name is Abby Knipp and I am a resident of North Bend, Oregon. I urge you to seek funding for south coast communities to improve our public transit, create safe bike lanes, and sidewalks. Please don't pump more funds into projects, like the "green" port container terminal, when our community needs real solutions to (the very visible) transportation issues.

I live on the east side of the estuary which is usually about a 15-20 minute drive to downtown Coos Bay where I work. I've dealt with on and off car issues this past year, resulting in biking to work. It's an incredibly scary bike ride because there are no bike lanes anywhere on my route and sidewalks either don't exist or they are occupied by pedestrians. Road biking brings me so much joy which helps with my depression and anxiety and supports my physical health, however I'm not able to bike as much since moving here because of how scary the roads are without bike lanes! I also find it crazy that Oregon promotes the 101 as a tourism attraction for those wanting to bicycle (also called bikepacking) the 101, yet it's one of the scariest roads I've ever biked and I've biked all over the world as an experienced bikepacker.

Additionally, a large part of my job is organizing meetings and events for community members (including youth and elders). The most frequent barrier to attending is transportation issues. Reasons pertain to the following: people can't get there because there are no buses that travel to their area or buses stop running early; they don't feel safe walking or biking; taxis are too expensive for them. This is an inequity encompassing issues pertaining to social justice, disability justice and climate justice. While people can use video-formats to participate in meetings, people want to connect in person! It benefits our mental and physical health significantly. The lack of available, safe, and reliable transportation is a serious issue.

As a trained marine scientist with a master's from Oregon State University, I cannot stress how important it is that we update the seismic reinforcements of bridges. There is a 40% chance of an earthquake with a magnitude 9.0 or higher in the next 50 years. There is sooo much science behind this and our coastal communities will only have 20 minutes to get to higher ground once the earthquake happens. Reinforcing our bridges could help save so many people's lives and allow people to get to safety. Oregon has a CSZ earthquake and tsunami resilience plan which outlines critical needs to reinforce buildings and bridges. Please consider pushing funds for reinforcements.

We need funds that improve our climate, safety, and local economies. Please invest in transportation that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, supports clean transportation choices to reduce drive-alone trips, and stops the surge in traffic deaths by making main streets safe to walk and bike. We need real solutions, not the promise of some greenwashed port container terminal as our economic solution. I firmly believe that if you put funds aside specifically for improving our public bus transit and roads, create bike lanes and sidewalks, then we could boost our local economy in so many ways! Again, the most significant barrier I hear from people who want to get involved in the community is transportation. Please prioritize funds for rural transportation needs in Coos County.

Abby Knipp