

The State of Oregon needs to make substantial investments in rail and public transportation infrastructure. Such investments would position Oregon as a leader in public transit development and bolster our economy. A comprehensive commuter rail network that connects the entire Willamette Valley with Bend would greatly improve city-to-city connectivity and help alleviate congestion along I-5.

Oregon must refrain from prioritizing freeway expansion. This approach diverts resources from future transit projects, increases traffic congestion, burdens future generations with maintenance costs, and undermines our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet our climate goals.

In Portland, we must prioritize the Southwest Corridor, which failed to secure funding in the 2020 ballot initiative and explore constructing a tunnel beneath downtown. This initiative would accelerate MAX lines across the Portland Metropolitan Area, easing traffic, lowering emissions, and enhancing the overall reliability of public transit in the region.

The Oregon Legislature should also consider granting Oregon Metro the authority to appoint members to the TriMet Board, removing this responsibility from the Governor's office. Many current board members need more interaction with the TriMet system, raising concerns about their commitment to improving it. Requiring board members to use public transit regularly would ensure they fully understand its impact and their role in shaping Portland's transportation future.

Thank you for considering these important issues.

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