



January 31, 2023

Co-Chairs Representative Susan McLain and Senator Chris Gorsek  
Vice-Chairs Representative Shelly Boshart Davis and Senator Brian Boquist  
Joint Committee on Transportation

VIA OLIS

Re: Support for HB 2101

Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee:

Washington County is the second largest county in the state of Oregon, with over 600,000 people residing within the County. Since 1990, the county's population has nearly doubled in size, most recently our population has grown at a rate equivalent to 19 people moving in every day. This growth has made us one of the most rapidly growing and most diverse county in the state. While We are also geographically diverse. We have dense, urban areas, smaller incorporated cities, and large areas of rural lands that; and all of those areas require investments in the roads that serve all of the communities that live, work and play throughout the county.

Even in a large county like Washington County, the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Fund Exchange Program has deliver critical improvements much faster and less expensively than we could with federal funds. The STBG Fund Exchange Program allows local agencies to exchange federal dollars for state dollars and avoid the burdensome federal requirements to use their funds. Like our smaller county counterparts, trying to manage the federal transportation funds has not been seen as the best use of our resources; therefore, we have used the fund exchange to support our transportation infrastructure needs.

For example, the Fund Exchange Program allow us to deliver the following projects:

- Replacing a low-volume rural bridge with critical safety deficiencies
- Supplementing County MSTIP funds to build a new roundabout on Hwy 47 at Martin Road in Forest Grove area – reinvesting fund exchange dollars in the state system
- Enhancing pedestrian crossing and other safety improvements at Farmington Road/170th Avenue intersection (ARTS project)
- Making intersection safety improvements at West Union Road/Neakahnie Avenue

Due to a favorable exchange rate, the STBG Fund Exchange Program is also a revenue generator for ODOT when functioning with full state resources. However, ODOT is restricted from using their Transportation Projects and Programs budget to support the fund exchange program and

must use their Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budget to sustain this cost-saving program. Placing the fund exchange into statute and creating flexibility for the funding that ODOT can use to continue this program will be a long-term benefit to counties, like Washington County, and the state. We support HB 2101 and finding sustainable solutions for the STBG Fund Exchange Program.

We are happy to answer any further questions and look forward to finding a solution that is a win for everyone.

Sincerely,

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