

May 10, 2023

Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem Oregon 97301  
*Sent via upload to website*

Re: Support for Safe Routes to Schools Legislative Concepts

Dear Joint Committee on Transportation,

As a member of the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, a former member of the Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee and a rural citizen of Coos Bay and the Coquille Indian Tribe, I would like to express my support in favor of the statutory changes to the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program proposed in the joint legislative omnibus bill (HB2099) and HB 3014.

Biking and walking are not currently a viable or safe mode of transportation for many in the state of Oregon. Pedestrian and cyclist deaths have dramatically increased 54% in the last two years (from 92 in 2020 to 142 in 2022, based on initial data) and the current plan for infrastructure development falls woefully short of any cohesive solution.

Safe Routes to School has been a great mechanism to better the lives of many students by improving the sidewalks, bringing attention to bimodal movement and conveying information to Oregonians of all ages. The following suggested changes have my full support:

- Include high schools in the SRTS program.
- Broaden the scope of the program to no less than a two-mile radius from a qualified campus.
- Lower the required local monetary match to no more than 20%.
- Allow walking school buses and non-student crossing guards to be eligible for pupil transportation reimbursement funds.

These changes could create more opportunities for rural communities and give districts more options for simple solutions. For these reasons I support the proposed statutory changes to the SRTS program.

Sincerely,

*Lauren Morris*

Lauren Morris  
2675 Mexeye Loop  
Coos Bay, OR 97420