

ANALYSIS

Consent Agenda Federal Grant Applications

Six state agencies seek approval to submit a total of eight grant applications to various federal agencies. Six of the applications are retroactive. Retroactive approval is necessary for grant applications with deadlines that fell before the submittal dates for the November 2025 meeting of the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means and for which prior legislative approval had not been obtained. All agencies submitted advance notification to legislative leadership of their intent to apply for the grants as required by the Department of Administrative Services and Legislative Fiscal Office.

Item 1: Department of Education – AI Literacy Tools

Analyst: Wendy Gibson

Request: Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Education in the amount of \$7,596,250, over a period of five years, to evaluate the effectiveness of AI-based literacy tools.

Analysis: The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) applied for a competitive \$7.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to conduct a study on the effectiveness of Amira Tutor, an AI-based literacy tool.

The Early Literacy grant program, funded in SB 5515 (2025), provides \$93.8 million in grant funding for literacy programs this biennium. High-dosage tutoring is an allowable expense under this grant program; however, the statute specifies that the tutoring be delivered “by a qualified tutor.” Some school districts have sought approval to start incorporating AI-based literacy tools into their literacy programs. Currently, Amira Tutor is the most requested supplemental tool for providing additional support to struggling students.

The study will evaluate the use of Amira Tutor as an effective literacy tool that can scale up high-dosage tutoring support. Participants will use the AI tool in conjunction with human tutors at 40 treatment schools across three cohorts. ODE will implement randomized controlled trials to evaluate the tool’s effectiveness and fidelity to the high-dosage tutoring model.

If awarded, the grant will extend over five years and require 10% matching funds; however, the software vendor, Amira Learning, Inc., will meet the complete match requirements through in-

kind goods and services. ODE provided the required 10-day notice to apply and subsequently submitted the agency's grant application by the October 14, 2025, deadline.

Item 3: Oregon Health Authority – Prescription Drug Monitoring

Analyst: Matt Stayner

Request: Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice in the amount of \$2,000,000, over a period of two years, for prescription drug monitoring.

Analysis: The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) seeks retroactive authorization to apply for a grant totaling \$2 million over a two-year period beginning October 1, 2025, from the U.S. Department of Justice through the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program. OHA intends to use the federal funding to improve program data quality, expand access to prescribing data, and increase availability of reports and analyses to inform decision making. State support is provided through existing in-kind expenditures, no additional positions are required.

The grant was released on September 16, 2025, with an application deadline of October 27, 2025. OHA submitted a 10-day notification letter on October 20, 2025.

Item 5: Department of State Police – Forensic Science Improvement

Analyst: John Borden

Request Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, in the amount of \$500,000 for the identification of unidentified human remains.

Analysis: The Oregon State Police – Office of the State Medical Examiner (OSP) requests retroactive approval to submit a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, for a Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement competitive grant in the amount of up to \$500,000 for the identification of unidentified human remains. There are currently 150 such individuals in Oregon.

The grant was announced on September 16, 2025, with an application deadline of November 3, 2025. On October 20, 2025, OSP submitted 10-day advance notification to Legislative Leadership of the Department's intent to apply for the grant. OSP submitted the application for the grant on November 3, 2025, prior to the close of the grant opportunity.

The grant is for up to three federal fiscal years beginning retroactively on October 1, 2025 and ending September 30, 2027. The grant has no state match requirement and there is no expectation of state support to continue the grant's activities beyond September 2027.

OSP anticipates that grant work will be accomplished through a contract vendor and that no additional positions will be required to implement the grant if awarded.

Item 6: Department of Corrections – Body Worn Cameras

Analyst: Steve Robbins

Request: Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, in the amount of \$2,000,000, over a period of three years, to pilot the implementation of body worn cameras.

Analysis: The Body-Worn Camera Policy and Implementation Program grant provides funding to support the purchase of body-worn cameras by publicly funded law enforcement and corrections agencies, and to support projects that advance digital evidence management to promote evidence-based practices. The Department of Corrections (DOC) is applying for \$2 million, the maximum award possible to an applying agency. DOC will purchase and deploy the units at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility to reduce risk and liability through transparency and accountability for interactions between staff and adults in custody.

The grant opportunity closed on October 27, 2025, and the Department provided the required 10-day notice to the Legislature on October 17, 2025. This is a competitive grant and has a 50% cash or in-kind match requirement, which the Department can meet within existing resources.

Item 7: Department of Veterans' Affairs – Veterans' Home Staffing

Analyst: John Terpening

Request: Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal application to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in the amount of \$134,000 for veterans' home staffing.

Analysis: The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) is requesting retroactive approval to apply for available federal grant funds that will be utilized for retention of nursing staff at The Dalles Veteran Home facility. The amount being requested is not to exceed 2% of total per diem payments and will cover anticipated costs, such as shift bonuses, from October 2025 to September 2026, that will allow for more consistent staffing levels at the Veteran Home. The grant has a 50% state match requirement which can be met through veteran home

funding already budgeted. ODVA provided the required 10-day notice to apply and subsequently submitted the agency's grant application by the September 30, 2025, deadline.

Item 9: Department of Transportation – Columbia River Highway State Trail

Analyst: Ben Ruef

Request: Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation in the amount of \$2,200,000 to support design work for the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail.

Analysis: The Rural and Tribal Assistance grant program funds project development activities such as planning, design, and feasibility analysis for rural and tribal applicants. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Region 1 submitted an application to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Build America Bureau, for design of the final gap in the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail between the Mitchell Point Tunnel and the City of Hood River.

The Historic Highway spans 73 miles between Troutdale and The Dalles, with some segments shared with vehicles and others serving exclusively as bicycle and pedestrian trails. Federal legislation establishing the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area requires ODOT to restore and reconnect the Historic Highway as a continuous state trail. The proposed project will design a 12-foot-wide, ADA-compliant, asphalt multi-use path connecting the Mitchell Point I-84 undercrossing, currently funded for construction through a 2022 Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects grant, to the Ruthton Trailhead in Hood River. Design elements include retaining walls, a viaduct, trailhead, and railings.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity opened August 7, 2025, with applications accepted beginning September 8 and closing October 8, 2025. The Build America Bureau expects to announce awards in December 2025. The grant does not require a local match. No additional expenditure limitation or positions are expected to be required.

Item 10: Department of Transportation – Passenger Rail - Eugene Layover

Analyst: Ben Ruef

Request: Approve the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation in the amount of \$12,000,000 to fund the Eugene Layover Project.

Analysis: The Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program funds capital projects outside the Northeast Corridor that improve performance, address the state-of-good-repair backlog, or expand intercity passenger rail service. Amtrak Cascades, a jointly sponsored regional passenger train service between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, British Columbia, is eligible under this program.

ODOT's Eugene Layover Project proposes constructing a 708-foot stub-end siding adjacent to the downtown passenger station for Amtrak Cascades layover operations. Currently, trains must travel 3.6 miles round trip to the Union Pacific Yard for layovers, causing freight-related delays that reduce schedule reliability. The new facility will allow trains to detrain and entrain passengers directly at the station, improving on-time performance and operational efficiency. Electrical upgrades will enable heating, air conditioning, refrigeration, and lighting during layover without extended locomotive idling.

Prior federal funds supported 30% design completion and National Environmental Policy Act clearance. The project will improve service reliability for the traveling public, eliminate conflicts between passenger and freight movements within the Eugene Yard, reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse-gas emissions, and cut daily train movements across seven downtown at-grade crossings by 40%. The project is listed in Oregon's Service Development Plan and State Rail Plan Implementation Plan.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity was re-issued September 22, 2025, with applications due January 7, 2026; awards are expected in spring 2026. The total project cost is \$15 million, including a \$3 million (20%) match from the Connect Oregon Federal Grant Match program, which uses dedicated Connect Oregon funds to leverage federal grants. ODOT has preliminary approval from Union Pacific, Amtrak, and the City of Eugene. If awarded, ODOT may need to request additional expenditure limitation; no positions will be required.

Item 11: Department of Transportation – Passenger Rail - Willbridge Crossovers

Analyst: Ben Ruef

Request: Approve the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation in the amount of \$9,600,000 to fund the Willbridge Crossovers Project.

Analysis: The Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program funds capital projects outside the Northeast Corridor that improve performance, address the state-of-good-repair backlog, or expand intercity passenger rail service. Amtrak Cascades, a regional passenger rail service between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, British Columbia, co-sponsored

by ODOT and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), is eligible under this program.

The Willbridge Crossovers Project will replace two existing 10-mile-per-hour crossover switches with upgraded crossovers allowing speeds up to 35 miles per hour. The project is located 4.3 miles north of Portland Union Station on the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway mainline. The upgrade will improve the fluidity of train movements for Amtrak Cascades and long-distance passenger trains, as well as freight traffic for BNSF, Union Pacific (UP), and Portland & Western Railroad. Improved crossover speed will reduce conflicts between freight and passenger trains, enhance schedule reliability, and improve on-time performance for the traveling public.

Engineering and design work is 30% complete, and National Environmental Policy Act requirements have been satisfied through a prior federal grant. The project has been identified as a priority since 2015 and is included in Oregon's Service Development Plan and the State Rail Plan Implementation Plan.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity was re-issued September 22, 2025, with applications due January 7, 2026; awards are expected in spring 2026. The total project cost is \$12 million, including a \$2.4 million (20%) match from the Connect Oregon Federal Grant Match program, which uses dedicated Connect Oregon funds to leverage federal grants. ODOT has preliminary approval from BNSF, Amtrak, UP, and Portland & Western Railroad. If awarded, ODOT may need to request additional expenditure limitation; no positions will be required.

Recommendation:

The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means approve the submission of the eight federal grant applications, en bloc, with the understanding that if the funds are awarded the agencies will return to the Legislative Assembly for approval of any necessary Federal Funds or Federal Funds as Other Funds expenditure limitation and position authority.



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Tina Kotek, Governor



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Dr. Charlene Williams
Director of the Department of Education

October 20, 2025

The Honorable Rep. Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
The Honorable Sen. Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez:

Nature of the Request

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) applied for a federal Education Innovation and Research (EIR) grant offered by the U.S. Department of Education and is requesting retroactive approval for this application.

Federal Grant Information

The U.S. Department of Education is offering mid-phase EIR grants to expand evidence-based early literacy initiatives. These grants are designed to support continued implementation, expansion, and evaluation of effective practices. Priority is given to state-led initiatives and high-impact tutoring models. ODE's proposed project, Early Literacy Enhanced Via AI Tutoring & Evaluation (ELEVATE), would pilot an AI-based tutoring and supplemental literacy program in up to 80 elementary schools and evaluate its impact on literacy outcomes.

Grant request amount: ODE is applying for \$7,596,250 million over five years. The anticipated project period spans FY 2025–2030 with an estimated start date of January 1, 2026, if the grant is awarded.

Application deadline: The federal application was submitted on October 13, 2025.

Required match: There is a 10% match required by this grant. The required match is being provided outside of ODE by a vendor contributing \$896,140 (exceeding the required 10% match) in-kind goods and services, Amira Tutor. The vendor is part of the research study providing the AI-based supplemental literacy program. As a result, no additional state expenditure limitation is needed to meet match requirements.

Impact on agency budget or performance measures: Because the match is being provided externally, there is no impact on current budgeted services or agency performance measures.

FTE to be paid through the grant: ODE proposed the grant fund a 1.0 Limited Duration FTE, Program Analyst 4, to manage the project in coordination with vendor and research partners. Exact position requirements are still under analysis.



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Dr. Charlene Williams

Director of the Department of Education

This grant directly supports ODE's mission of fostering equity and excellence for every learner, particularly in literacy, through collaboration with educators, partners, tribes, and communities. It also supports Governor Kotek's statewide priority on early literacy, as enacted through the Early Literacy Success Initiative, and is aligned to other efforts including the federal Comprehensive State Literacy Development Grant.

If ODE receives approval, we will be seeking federal fund limitation in the amount of \$7,596,250.

Sincerely,

Dr. Charlene Williams

Director, Oregon Department of Education

Tina Kotek, Governor

October 20, 2025

The Honorable Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE, H-178
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs:

Nature of Request

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Public Health Division (PHD) requests retroactive approval to apply for federal funding offered through the U.S. Department of Justice's *Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program* (PDMP) grant. The Notice of Funding Opportunity was released on Sept. 16, 2025, a 10-day notification letter was provided to the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House on Oct. 20, 2025, and the application is due Oct. 27, 2025.

Agency Action

The Oregon Legislature established the state's PDMP in 2011 to promote patient safety, improve clinical outcomes, and reduce health care costs and address the opioid epidemic in Oregon. This program is statutorily required to collect data on all controlled substances dispensed in Oregon and make this information available to providers at all times to support clinical decision-making.

The Harold Rogers grant is designed to enhance PDMPs and expand program activities, rather than support general operations. Funded projects are expected to improve data access and utilization by prescribers by expanding interstate data sharing and electronic health record (EHR) integration; supporting data-driven allocation of substance use disorder (SUD) resources; and strengthening analysis and dissemination of PDMP-based data.

OHA anticipates \$1.0 million will be made available annually over a two-year period (Oct. 1, 2025 through Sept. 30, 2027), for a total of \$2.0 million. No state match or maintenance of effort is required.

Senator Kate Lieber
Representative Tawna Sanchez
October 20, 2025

Grant funds will be used to:

1. Strengthen the PDMP's capacity to share proscribing, dispensing, and use data within and across states.
2. Support data-informed allocation of SUD treatment and prevention resources.
3. Enhance clinical decision-making among prescribers.
4. Design, implement, and advance initiatives to improve linkage, analysis, reporting, usage, and sharing of PDMP-derived data.

These activities align with OHA's strategic goal of eliminating health inequities in Oregon by 2030. Expected outcomes include improved data quality, expanded access to prescribing data, and increased availability of PDMP reports and analyses to inform decision making. These efforts aim to prevent misuse of controlled substances and support treatment and recovery efforts, ultimately decreasing overdose deaths in Oregon.

If funded, OHA will request expenditure limitation only. Existing staff will support grant activities through direct and in-kind support from other funding sources. No new position authority will be requested.

Action Requested

The Oregon Health Authority requests retroactive approval to apply for the *Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program* grant offered by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Legislation Affected

None.

Sincerely,



Sejal Hathi, MD MBA
Director

EC: Matt Stayner, Legislative Fiscal Office
Stacey Chase, Department of Administrative Services
Jason Trombley, Department of Administrative Services
Kate Nass, Department of Administrative Services
Amanda Beitel, Legislative Fiscal Office



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Oregon State Police
Headquarters
3565 Trelstad Ave Se
Salem, Oregon 97317
503-378-3720
503-378-8282 Fax
503-585-1452 TTY

October 20, 2025

The Honorable Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE, H-178
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez:

Nature of the Request

The Oregon State Police (OSP) respectfully requests retroactive approval to apply to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), for the FY 2025 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement – Competitive Grant Program in the amount not to exceed \$500,000. This grant application submission is due November 3, 2025. The grant award is a maximum of thirty-six (36) months with a retroactive start date of October 1, 2025.

Agency Action

This is a competitive grant, administered through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) for the purpose of improving forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services, including services provided by laboratories operated by states and units of local government and improve timeliness of services and reduce forensic analysis backlog.

The BJA helps state, local, and tribal jurisdictions reduce and prevent crime, lower recidivism, and promote fair and safe criminal justice system. There is no state match or maintenance of effort requirements for this grant. The grant funds would be used to support contractual services with specialized forensic laboratories.

This grant funding will directly support the Medical Examiner's capacity to employ both Short Tandem Repeat (STR) analysis and Forensic Genetic Genealogy (FGG) services in the identification of unidentified human remains (UHRs), of which there are more than 150 known in Oregon. The federal funding would allow OSP to contract with specific laboratories for the STR and the FGG services.

By supporting STR and FGG services, this grant will increase the rate of identifications among Oregon's unresolved UHR cases, ensuring that individuals are returned to their families and communities. It will improve the efficiency and quality of forensic casework by reducing reliance on extremely limited internal resources and integrating cutting-edge technology into standard practice. It will also strengthen interagency collaboration, as FGG results often rely on coordinated efforts with law enforcement,

genealogists, and medical examiner personnel. The grant funding will further the agency's commitment to the people of Oregon and the families of missing persons.

Action Requested

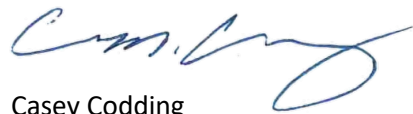
The Oregon State Police requests that the Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means retroactively approve the request to apply for the FY2025 Paul Coverdell Forensic Improvement – Competitive Grant Program in the amount not to exceed \$500,000.

Legislation Affected

None

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Casey Coddling', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Casey Coddling
Superintendent
Oregon State Police

cc: Valerie Colas, Governor's Office
Jonathan Bennett, Dept. of Administrative Services - Chief Financial Office
John Borden, Legislative Fiscal Office
Josh Brooks, OSP Deputy Superintendent
Jenny Cribbs, OSP Financial & Business Services Administrator



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Oregon Department of Corrections

Headquarters
3723 Fairview Industrial Drive SE 200
Salem, OR 97302



October 17, 2025

The Honorable Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE, H-178
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez:

Nature of the Request

The Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) respectfully requests retroactive approval to apply for the Fiscal Year 2025 Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Body-Worn Camera Policy and Implementation Program Grant.

Agency Action

Due to the time-sensitive nature of the federal funding opportunity and the short turnaround between the notice of funding availability and the application deadline, DOC proceeded with the application process while concurrently submitting the ten-day notification to the Legislative Fiscal Office and the Chief Financial Office on October 17, 2025.

The solicitation posting date was September 17, 2025. The agency first learned about the grant on or about October 10, 2025. DOC Fiscal Staff was first alerted about the grant on October 16, 2025. DOC fiscal staff worked closely with DOC program staff, Legislative Fiscal Office, Department of Administrative Services Chief Financial Office to submit the required 10-day notification on October 17, 2025, and this retroactive approval letter the following week. DOC plans to submit for this grant on the October 27, 2025, deadline.

Action Requested

DOC is requesting approval to apply for the BJA Body-Worn Camera Policy and Implantation Program grant opportunity. The purpose of this grant is to establish a body-worn camera program within DOC. The initial implementation will focus on Coffee Creek Correctional Facility (Oregon's only female facility), DOC's Transport Unit, and Special Housing Units in facilities statewide. These are three critical areas where we believe the use of body cameras will decrease DOC's exposure to lawsuits stemming from interactions between staff and adults in custody. Body-worn camera footage will be used to enhance

staff training in de-escalation, communication, and procedural compliance, while also serving as reliable documentation for internal investigations, disciplinary actions, and legal proceedings.

DOC is seeking \$2,000,000 in federal funding through this grant, which must be expended within 36 months of receiving the award. A 50% state match is required, which DOC will fulfill using existing general fund appropriation. The implementation of the body-worn camera program will not require additional full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

The agency anticipates a reduction of litigation due to the use of body-worn cameras. However, DOC will be assessing the effectiveness of a body-worn camera program based on the work completed under this grant and will continue dialog with the Governor's Office and Legislative Fiscal Office to determine the future of this program.

Legislation Affected

At this time, current legislation will not be affected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Reese". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Reese" clearly distinguishable.

Michael Reese
Agency Director



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs

700 Summer Street NE

Salem, Oregon 97301

Phone (503) 373-2085

Fax (503) 373-2392

www.oregon.gov/odva

10/20/2025

The Honorable Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE, H-178
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez:

Nature of the Request

ODVA is requesting retroactive approval of Federal Funds to receive federal grant funding from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) for the purpose of hiring and retention of nurses at The Dalles Veteran Home facility. ODVA is requesting an amount not to exceed 2% of total per diem payments, which is \$134,000. The timeframe this will cover is October 1, 2025-September 30, 2026. The State match requirements are 50%.

Staff recruitment and retention at the Veteran's homes support the Agency's mission by delivering earned benefits and services that improve the lives of veterans and spouses currently residing at the Homes. Ensuring enough staff are available to meet the needs of every resident is vital to the health of those in our care. Ensuring, as often as possible, that the staff members remain the same each day, helps promote trust and builds relationships that can have a positive effect on the mental and behavioral health of residents.

Agency Action

ODVA has distributed 2025-27 budget to program leadership absent this grant funding request. The request would supplement/offset costs on our Veterans Care Centers of Oregon (VCCO) contract and allow for greater program support through additional S&S resources. ODVA currently pays in excess of \$17k per month (\$200k per year) in shift bonuses alone through our Enterprise Other Funds. The Veterans' Homes are an Enterprise fund and generate their own revenue, nursing staff bonuses have already been budgeted for. The State required 50% match would come from our Enterprise Other Funds and is included in our Vet Homes budget. This grant has no impact on FTE as none of the grant funding would go to support ODVA staff.

Action Requested

We are requesting retroactive approval of Federal Funds to receive federal grant funding from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA). No impact on Agency positions or FTE.

Legislation Affected

None

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dr." and last name "Daniels" being more prominent than the middle name "Council".

Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels
Director, Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs

cc: Amanda Beitel, Legislative Fiscal Officer
Kate Nass, Chief Financial Officer
John Terpening, LFO Deputy Legislative Fiscal Officer
Courtney Rogers, DAS Policy and Budget Analyst
Nicole Dolan, ODVA Chief Financial Officer
Jay DeFillipo, ODVA Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs Analyst



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Transportation

Director's Office

355 Capitol St. NE, MS 11

Salem, OR 97301

October 20, 2025

Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez:

NATURE OF THE REQUEST

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Region 1 requests retroactive permission to apply for \$2,200,000 million in Rural and Tribal Assistance Program (RTA) funding from the US Department of Transportation's Build America Bureau.

AGENCY ACTION

On August 7, 2025, the Build America Bureau opened applications for the RTA discretionary grant program. The program makes funding available to eligible applicants – including cities, local governments, state governments, and Tribes – for project development activities, including planning, design, feasibility analyses, and more. The Build America Bureau has combined fiscal year (FY) 2024 and FY 2025 funds into a single Notice of Funding Opportunity, with up to \$54.2 million available in this cycle. Applications were accepted on a rolling (first-come, first-served) basis beginning September 8, 2025. The application portal closed on October 8, 2025. The anticipated award selection date has been set for December 2025.

ODOT's Region 1 has identified the need for design funding to complete the gap on the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail between Mitchell Point Tunnel and the City of Hood River. The [Historic Columbia River Highway](#) spans 73 miles between Troutdale and The Dalles, with some segments shared with vehicles, and some serving exclusively as a bicycle and pedestrian trail. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area federal legislation passed by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Reagan requires the Oregon Department of Transportation to restore and reconnect the Historic Columbia River Highway as a state trail. The State Trail is also included in the National Scenic Area Management Plan. If awarded, this grant will help fund the design work to bridge the final gap in the Trail between the Mitchell Point I-84 undercrossing (construction anticipated in late 2026 via the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Program construction grant awarded in 2022) and the Ruthton Trailhead in Hood River, with a 12-foot wide, ADA-compliant, asphalt multi-use path. Design of this segment will include walls, a viaduct, trailhead, and railings, exclusively for bike/ped use. This project will ultimately provide an off-Interstate connection between Gorge communities and provide an emergency route alternative if I-84 is closed. Additionally, this state trail will continue to attract tourism, creating economic opportunities for the rural communities in the region. This funding will help make the next segment of the State Trail "shovel ready" to apply for future federal construction funding.

Grant Request:	\$ 2,200,000
<u>Matching Funds:</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>
Total Project Cost:	\$2,200,000

There is no required match for this funding source.

This project builds on years of State Trail construction, including a previously awarded Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Program (NSFLTP) grant. The RTA program is intended to help rural and Tribal applicants further develop projects that will qualify for future federal grant funding opportunities. We believe this project is an excellent candidate as previous sections of the Trail have been almost entirely funded by competitive federal grants and help serve rural communities. ODOT plans to continue to pursue federal funding for State Trail construction opportunities to complete the full 73 miles of the Columbia River Highway.

ACTION REQUESTED

ODOT requests retroactive permission to apply for \$2,200,000 in funding under the Rural and Tribal Assistance Program (RTA) funding. No additional expenditure limitation or positions will be required if funds are awarded.

LEGISLATION AFFECTED

None.

Sincerely,



Kristopher W. Strickler
Director



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Transportation

Director's Office

355 Capitol St. NE, MS 11

Salem, OR 97301

October 13, 2025

The Honorable Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE, H-178
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez:

NATURE OF THE REQUEST

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Public Transportation Division (PTD) requests permission to apply for \$12,000,000 in Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Program grant funding from the Federal Railroad Administration for the Eugene Layover Project.

AGENCY ACTION

The FSP Program funds intercity passenger rail capital projects outside of the Northeast Corridor that make progress on the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, or expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service. Amtrak Cascades – a regional passenger train service between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, British Columbia, co-sponsored by ODOT and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) – is eligible for this program. Minimum required match is 20 percent of the project total cost. A Notice of Funding Opportunity for this program was originally issued on October 1, 2024, as the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program and ODOT applied for this grant. Due to changing priorities from the new federal administration, the updated Notice of Funding Opportunity for this program was re-issued September 22, 2025, and the application deadline is January 7, 2026. Projects are expected to be awarded in spring 2026.

ODOT and its partners have identified efficiency/performance issues for Amtrak Cascades in and around the Eugene station. Currently, the Amtrak Cascades train has to layover in the Union Pacific (UP) Eugene Yard, a round trip of 3.6 miles from the passenger rail depot. Passenger trains experience delays from freight trains when traveling back and forth from the depot, reducing the on-time performance and reliability of Amtrak services. To address this, ODOT proposes the Eugene Layover project, which would construct a 708-foot-long stub-end siding (essentially a train parking spot) at Eugene's downtown passenger station exclusively for Amtrak Cascades to detrain and entrain passengers and for layover between runs. The project also includes electrical upgrades for maintaining heating, air conditioning, food car refrigeration, and lighting during layover to eliminate the need for hours-long idling of the

November 4, 2024

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locomotive.

Prior federal funding enabled 30 percent completion of engineering and design, as well as NEPA clearance for this project. The principal beneficiary will be the traveling public through improved on-time reliability of the Amtrak Cascades service. Other benefits entail eliminating conflict between passenger and freight movements within Eugene Yard, a 40 percent reduction in daily passenger train movements over seven downtown Eugene at-grade crossings, and less fuel consumption with attendant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The need for this project has been recognized for more than 20 years, and its priority is driven by the confluence of match and eligibility by improving performance of intercity passenger rail service. The project is included in Oregon's Service Development Plan roster of projects and the Rail Needs Inventory in the Oregon State Rail Plan Implementation Plan.

Grant Request:	\$12,000,000
<u>Matching Funds:</u>	<u>\$3,000,000</u>
Total Project Cost:	\$15,000,000

The source of the matching funds is the Connect Oregon Federal Grant Match program created by ODOT from dedicated Connect Oregon funds for use in leveraging federal grants. ODOT has preliminary approval from UP, Amtrak, and the City of Eugene. Upon completion there will be no further costs to ODOT. Without federal funding this project will not be constructed.

ACTION REQUESTED

ODOT requests approval to apply for \$12,000,000 in Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program funding. If this grant is awarded, ODOT may need to return for additional expenditure limitation; no additional positions will be needed to complete this workload.

LEGISLATION AFFECTED

None.

Sincerely,



Kristopher W. Strickler
Director



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Transportation

Director's Office

355 Capitol St. NE, MS 11

Salem, OR 97301

October 13, 2025

The Honorable Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE, H-178
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez:

NATURE OF THE REQUEST

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Public Transportation Division (PTD) requests permission to apply for \$9,600,000 in Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Program grant funding from the Federal Railroad Administration for the Willbridge Crossovers Project.

AGENCY ACTION

The FSP Program funds intercity passenger rail capital projects outside of the Northeast Corridor that make progress on the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, or expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service. Amtrak Cascades – a regional passenger train service between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, British Columbia, co-sponsored by ODOT and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) – is eligible for this program. Minimum required match is 20 percent of the project total cost. A Notice of Funding Opportunity for this program was originally issued on October 1, 2024 as the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program and ODOT applied for this grant. Due to changing priorities from the new federal administration, the updated Notice of Funding Opportunity for this program was re-issued September 22, 2025, and the application deadline is January 7, 2026. Projects are expected to be awarded in spring 2026.

At Willbridge, a location on the double-track Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway 4.3 miles north of Portland Union Station, two interlocked crossovers allow trains to switch from one mainline to the other mainline. The existing crossovers were built with tight radius switches that limit crossover speed to 10 miles per hour (MPH). This project will replace the existing switches with crossovers with a less tight radius that will allow trains to change tracks at 35 MPH to improve velocity and support schedule reliability. This will improve service for the Amtrak Cascades and long-distance passenger trains that pass through daily, along with freight trains entering and leaving northwest Portland freight yards.

This project is at 30 percent completion of engineering and design, and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements have been met through a previous federal

November 4, 2024

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grant. The principal beneficiary will be the traveling public through improved performance of ODOT's and WSDOT's Amtrak Cascades service, although freight rail will also benefit through increased reliability. BNSF, Union Pacific (UP) and Portland & Western freight trains all utilize this route. Improving the fluidity through Willbridge will reduce mutual delays caused by interference between passenger and freight movements.

The need for this project has been recognized since 2015, and its priority is driven by simultaneous availability of match funds and qualification under this grant program because the upgrade will improve performance of intercity passenger rail service. The project is included in Oregon's Service Development Plan roster of projects and the Rail Needs Inventory in the Oregon State Rail Plan Implementation Plan.

Grant Request:	\$9,600,000
<u>Matching Funds:</u>	<u>\$2,400,000</u>
Total Project Cost:	\$12,000,000

The source of the matching funds is the Connect Oregon Federal Grant Match program created by ODOT from dedicated Connect Oregon funds for use in leveraging federal grants. ODOT has preliminary approval from BNSF, Amtrak, UP, and Portland & Western Railroad. Upon completion there will be no further costs to ODOT. Without federal funding this project will not be constructed.

ACTION REQUESTED

ODOT requests approval to apply for \$9,600,000 in Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Rail Program funding. If this grant is awarded, ODOT may need to return for additional expenditure limitation; no additional positions will be needed to complete this workload.

LEGISLATION AFFECTED

None.

Sincerely,



Kristopher W. Strickler
Director