

To the honorable members of the committee,
My name is Brittany Dillard, and I am a concerned Portland resident. I am testifying to how detrimental it is for this bill to pass, particularly focusing on the public transportation piece.

This bill focuses on transportation funding needs, including an increase in public transportation funds which would help prevent significant cuts to public transit services, such as TriMet. Without this funding, TriMet may have to eliminate up to 45 of their current 79 bus lines.

I personally believe that by voting no, and essentially reducing the funding for public transit, it would be quite an unfavorable decision. If TriMet follows through with their service reductions and the eradication of bus lines, it would have an incredibly negative impact on a multitude of people, including myself.

I know Portland has been attempting to reduce homelessness within our community, as is evident by the millions of dollars being spent in an attempt to alleviate this issue. I am convinced that the reduction of TriMet services would only cause this issue to worsen. For instance, I aged out of Oregon's foster care system into homelessness. I didn't do anything to deserve it; I was merely a teenager that had aged out of a broken system with no support. However, TriMet helped me get back on my feet.

With TriMet, I was able to bus to community college and earn myself a degree. The instructors there provided me with resources regarding how to obtain my education, search for employment, and acquire housing. TriMet also currently provides me with affordable transportation to my employer. Although my job unfortunately doesn't pay enough for me to afford a car, it does provide enough to sustain the roof over my head. Without TriMet, I am quite nervous about the possibility of losing my job due to having no way to get there. If that were to happen, I fear I may become homeless again.

There is also an abundance of individuals just like me within Portland that do not have the ability to drive, who would also fear job loss and even the possibility of homelessness. People within our community would also lose the ability to attend crucial doctor appointments, reliably attend court hearings, feed themselves via grocery shopping, volunteer to benefit our city – so many important activities that rely on transportation would become incredibly difficult to participate in without the access of affordable public transit.

There would be a bunch of extra unnecessary distress amongst our community if this bill doesn't pass. So, I am pleading with everybody to reconsider their vote and to allow people like me to remain a functioning member of our city. Thank you for reading my testimony, your consideration of these matters is very much appreciated.