

Submitter: Brian Ettlting
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3453
Co-chairs Gorsek, McLain, and members of the Committee.

I am Brian Ettlting. I live in northeast Portland.

I support HB 3453 which creates the Westside Express Service Authority and directs TriMet to transfer operation of the WES commuter rail line to this authority. I applaud Representatives Mannix and Neron for introducing this bill. This could be a step forward for Oregon to take responsibility to improve WES and possibility expand this passenger rail line in the future.

The WES Trains are amazing, which currently runs a couple times a day from Beaverton to Wilsonville. I took the train last July to meet up with a friend in Tigard and I loved riding on it. However, it only runs a couple times a day. The route is also way too short. It needs to be expanded all the way to Salem.

You might recognize me because I to come to Salem periodically to testify and lobby legislators for climate and environmental bills. I always try to carpool with friends. A couple of times, I took the Amtrak train and bus to come to Salem. The last time I tried to take a train to leave Salem and return to Portland on February 4th, the Amtrak train was delayed for 10 hours. Fortunately, I got a ride back to Portland with a friend.

I hate that drive from Portland to Salem on I-5 because of all the traffic delays at rush hour. I am here today to lobby for you, Oregon legislators and your staff, as well as citizen advocates like me. Frankly, your commute stinks! There must be a better way to commute to Salem to not get stuck in traffic on I-5. Let's aim to increase dependable passenger train service in the Willamette Valley from Portland to Salem and even down to Eugene.

I think HB 3453 could be a step in the conversation to do that.

I am here today to speak for the passenger trains and even blow my train whistle.

Thank you for considering my testimony.