



March 17, 2025

Senator Gorsek, Co-Chair
Representative McLain, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Transportation
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain and Members of the Committee,

My name is Neil Baunsgard, and I serve as the Transportation and Climate Policy Manager at The Environmental Center, which works to embed sustainability in daily life here in Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 2963, which would establish e-bike rebates to make this efficient, affordable, and sustainable transportation option more accessible to Oregonians.

At The Environmental Center, we advocate for practical, community-centered solutions to reduce emissions, improve mobility, and enhance economic resilience. In recent years, we have seen a significant increase in the adoption of electric micromobility in Central Oregon, particularly e-bikes. Residents are using e-bikes to commute to work, transport children to school, run errands, and reduce their reliance on personal vehicles. However, for many Oregonians, the upfront cost remains a significant barrier to ownership. HB 2963 would provide critical financial support, helping more people—including lower-income households—access the benefits of e-bike transportation.

Economic Savings and Household Affordability

Transportation costs are one of the largest household expenses, and e-bikes offer a low-cost, reliable alternative to car ownership. By reducing spending on gas, car maintenance, and transit fares, e-bikes can provide meaningful financial relief, particularly for those in rural and suburban communities where transit options are limited. A rebate program would make this cost-saving opportunity

available to more Oregonians, ensuring that sustainable transportation is not just a privilege for those who can afford the initial investment.

Reducing Congestion and Improving Mobility

Traffic congestion is a growing issue in Central Oregon and across the state. Short car trips—often less than five miles—are a major contributor to gridlock. By incentivizing e-bike use, HB 2963 would encourage more people to replace short car trips with a cleaner, more efficient mode of transportation. This shift would reduce parking demand, improve traffic flow, and create safer, more accessible streets for all users.

Expanding Freedom and Access

For many Oregonians, particularly those in areas with limited public transit, e-bikes offer a practical and flexible mobility option. Unlike transit, which relies on fixed routes and schedules, e-bikes provide users with the freedom to travel on their own terms. This is particularly valuable for rural and historically underserved communities, where transportation barriers often limit access to jobs, education, healthcare, and essential services. HB 2963 would empower more individuals to choose a transportation mode that aligns with their needs and lifestyle.

At The Environmental Center, we believe that all Oregonians should have access to affordable, sustainable transportation options. HB 2963 is a crucial step toward making e-bikes a viable and equitable choice for more people. I respectfully urge your support for this bill and appreciate your consideration.

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