

June 11, 2025

**Senator Gorsek and Representative McLain
Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301**

Re: Support of HB 2025

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

Thank you for assembling a transportation package that delivers crucial revenue for all modes of transportation. The phased 0.2% increase in the employee payroll tax will provide essential funding for maintaining public transit service, both for TriMet and across our state.

Like many of our transit partners, TriMet's operating costs have increased more than 50 percent over the last five years. We are facing an operating budget deficit that will exceed one billion dollars by 2032. Without this transportation package funding, we would need to cut 27 percent of our bus service beginning July, 2027.

That amounts to eliminating up to 45 of our current 79 bus lines. These cuts would take transportation access away from thousands of people across the Portland region. I am specifically concerned about this loss of service for the 35 percent of our riders who are transit dependent. This during a time when TriMet Ridership Continues to Increase: I just got our May numbers in, and we are up 4.5% from May of last year. And overall, ridership has increased 63% since the heart of the Covid pandemic.

The increased transit funding in the package gives us more time to pursue financial efficiencies, spending reductions and other solutions to avoid cuts to service. For the coming fiscal year, that means cuts to discretionary spending and other changes that will reduce our deficit by over \$24 million dollars.

TriMet believes that every Oregonian deserves access to safe, reliable and affordable transportation. We urge you to pass House Bill 2025 to help preserve public transit. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Sam Desue, Jr.
General Manager
TriMet