

August 31, 2025

**Senate President Rob Wagner and House Speaker Julie Fahey
Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301**

Re: Support of HB 3391

Dear Co-Chairs Wagner and Fahey and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for assembling an emergency funding proposal that includes investment in public transit.

TriMet is facing a \$300 million structural budget deficit caused by operating costs that have outpaced revenue growth and shifting ridership patterns post-pandemic.

TriMet is committed to balancing our budget by 2028. Our first step to address the deficit will be to cut \$93 million dollars in administrative expenses. That work is underway now.

While a 0.1% increase in the employee payroll tax will not prevent TriMet from making all service cuts necessary to help balance our budget, it will reduce the severity of cuts and allow us time to find greater internal efficiencies and additional revenue sources.

Anything less than a permanent increase in the STIF will result in deep cuts to transit service by the end of this decade. Without additional revenue, TriMet will be forced to cut as many as 23 bus lines, discontinue night service on up to 17 bus lines and make significant route changes to as many as 22 bus lines among other disruptions to service.

I am specifically concerned about this loss of service for the 35 percent of our riders who are transit dependent. Last year, that represented 23 million trips.

A sunset of the 0.1% increase in 2028 will not leave enough time to generate replacement revenue from another source, while inflation will continue to put pressure on the cost of providing service.

The success of transit goes hand in hand with Portland Metro's economic prosperity and TriMet will continue partnering with the legislature to find sustainable and adequate funding for this public service.

My thanks and respect for all of your hard work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sam Desue, Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

Sam Desue, Jr.
General Manager
TriMet