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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

I'm writing to promote a safety-first, multi-modal mindset when funding transportation in Oregon. This includes Safe Routes to School, safe crosswalks, curb cuts, protected bike lanes, and frequent, reliable transit. I've never been able to afford a car in Portland, so I've gotten around for 13 years by bus, bicycle, and walking. Many Oregonians don't drive, whether they're too young, can't afford a car, or have health issues that preclude driving. We all deserve to leave our homes without fear of dying in the street. With proper infrastructure, everybody wins. Children can get to school by themselves, promoting independence and saving their parents a frustrating and time-consuming drop-off/pickup process. Adults who don't drive can go to work, shop, and socialize instead of being trapped at home or dependent on others for a ride. Walking or biking daily is an easy way to improve health. Foot traffic on commercial streets has been shown to improve business and public safety. Fewer cars on the road means improved air quality and less congestion. By prioritizing a wide variety of transportation options, you can increase livability, revitalize neighborhoods, and improve traffic.

Biking has transformed my life for the better. If you haven't experienced it, it's hard to convey how it feels when exercise, fresh air, and fun are wrapped into your daily commute. When you're biking, it's easier to pull over and check out a store or cafe that looks interesting. It's not unusual for an acquaintance to recognize you on your bike and exchange a quick friendly greeting in a way that wouldn't happen if you were both inside your own cars. On the other hand, I've read the obituary for a woman my age who was biking on a street I regularly bike on when she was hit by a truck. I've witnessed a hit and run. I'm worried that highway mega-projects will eat up all the money that could go toward saving lives.

Again, please fund safe and viable alternatives to driving.