

## **Testimony of Metro Councilor Christine Lewis**

### **Support on HB 4008**

### **House Committee on Transportation**

**February 11, 2026**



**Metro**

Metro supports HB 4008 and the creation of a transit funding task force. The impending service cuts facing my district and facing many communities across the state is deeply concerning. It is a statewide issue, and it needs statewide solutions. Bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders to deeply engage and dive into solutions puts us on a successful path to advancing the necessary fixes in 2027 and beyond.

Finding solutions is crucial because of the critical role that transit plays for our economy, for our people and for our environment.

Transit benefits business and spurs economic growth. By shifting people from cars, transit reduces traffic congestion, allowing goods and services to move more quickly through Metro's dense urban centers. We all know that time is money. Strong transit systems help Oregon's businesses.

Transit is also about people. It's about my constituents who cannot drive or cannot afford to drive. And rely on transit to get their jobs, the grocery store and their medical appointments. 67,000 metro area households do not own a car. They don't have a choice and need the bus or the max train to be able to live their lives. And this reality doesn't face just a small portion of our population ---- approximately 1 in 4 Oregonians can't or don't drive.

Transit is also one of the best transportation investments we have to reduce climate change. Transportation is the largest source of Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing cars on the road means less air pollution, but this only works if we have accessible, affordable and convenient transit. In order to shift out of their cars, people need to know that their bus will arrive on time and get them easily where they need to go. We are headed in the wrong direction on this in the Metro area.

This is not the future I want. And this is the future we can expect if we don't all work together to figure out how to fund our transit systems. It will take all of us – the state, the region, community organizations and business – working together to find solutions. I am confident we can solve this problem and create the transit system we need in this state and in our region. Creating a funding task force is the critical first step and I urge your consideration of this bill.