



TOGO SUPPORTS PASSENGER RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

ToGo Board Represents:

Metro
Oregon Department of Transportation
Point2point Solutions - Lane Transit District
Rogue Valley Transportation District
Salem-Keizer Transit
Northwest Transportation Options- Sunset Empire Transportation District
Trans-Watch
vRide, Oregon Project Office
Alta Planning + Design
Cascades West Council of Governments
Commute Options for Central Oregon

The Transportation Options Group of Oregon (ToGo) represents Oregon's primary association of professionals and advocates who promote a balanced and integrated system of transportation alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle. Our group supports efforts to ensure funding of essential non-highway programs and services, such as the Amtrak Cascades Passenger Rail service, the Special Transportation Fund (STF) for public transit, and HB 2639, Lane Transit District's Youth Transit Pass Demonstration Project.

ToGo has learned that the required budget of \$10.4 million to sustain the Amtrak Cascades service was reduced by the Ways and Means Committee. Amtrak Cascades will no longer operate train service in Oregon without the full requested amount. ToGo believes passenger rail is a key part of building a balanced transportation network that serves the needs of Oregonians. We remain steadfast advocates of transportation that connects communities, and support legislation to fully fund passenger rail service in the State of Oregon. Without the \$10.4 million, passenger rail will end in Oregon, thereby depriving citizens and visitors to the state of a viable transportation option. Fully funding Oregon's only passenger rail service will benefit the cities along the route by maintaining critical connections to their regional transit systems while supporting jobs, families, and community livability. We urge you to fully fund passenger rail for this biennium, as well as subsequent years, and to show your commitment to supporting non-highway travel options.

ToGo also strongly supports the \$40 million Special Transportation Fund request to provide greater mobility for older adults, people with disabilities and low-income Oregonians. The 2013-2015 STF Supplemental A, B and C benefited the entire state from La Grande to Medford to Salem by relieving the burden on transit systems' general funds and in some cases helping restore much needed transit services. Stable and predictable funding is critical to all transit providers' ability to maintain and restore routes. STF is used as a portion of the required local match to federal funding that would otherwise be 'left on the table'. We urge you to fund the STF request to benefit public transit systems statewide.

Investing in Oregon youth's mobility has shown how moderate funding of transit passes can have significant positive impacts on school travel, after-school activities, employment, recreation, and overall health. Co-benefits include reduction in school traffic, lessened parental driving demands, and generations of knowledgeable transit users. The investment today will pay significant and long lasting dividends for Oregon's transportation network. HB 2639 aligns with ToGo's mission, and our 32 represented agencies, organizations, and businesses lend our support to it for the benefit of Oregon's youth.