



600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736
oregonmetro.gov

May 21st, 2026

The Honorable Representative Bonamici
2231 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Representative Bynum
1508 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Representative Dexter
1207 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Representative Hoyle
1620 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Representative Salinas
403 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Representative Bentz
409 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Members of the Oregon House Delegation,

The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) urges you to support and co-sponsor H.R.7437, the BASICS (Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success) Act, introduced by Representatives McDonald Rivet and Bresnahan.

As a part of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) board, JPACT helps direct \$50 million in federal transportation funding each year to projects across the Greater Portland region, including 3 counties and 24 cities to improve safety, reduce congestion, and support economic growth. JPACT member agencies manage a vast transportation system including more than 3,700 miles of roads, bridges, and highways serving more than 1.7 million people that live, work, and commute here.

What the BASICS Act would do:

- **Deliver regional priorities faster.** The BASICS Act accelerates delivery of regionally supported projects by increasing funding for the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program. As the most flexible federal transportation formula funding program, STBG allows states and regions to move projects forward efficiently and deliver tangible benefits for local businesses, workers, and communities in every congressional district. This would enable the Oregon Department of Transportation to receive more STBG funding, which turn trickles down to our MPO's ability to fund more community-scale projects such as the NW Division Street project in Gresham, the NE MLK Boulevard Safety project in Portland, the North Dakota Street Bridge project in Tigard, and the Trolley Trail bridge project in Gladstone. STBG funds are

also the primary source for our investments in transportation demand management programs, transit-oriented development projects, and transportation technology solutions across the region.

- **Focus on road safety.** With more than 100 people killed in traffic crashes in our region in 2025, transportation safety is one of JPACT's biggest priorities. The BASICS Act increases and protects funding for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and directs states to spend a portion of that funding on local high-risk roads. We are grateful that ODOT already expresses their commitment to safety by allocating a proportion of their HSIP dollars to local facilities, but this provision is important for ensuring other states help us meet our national safety goals. Further, increasing HSIP funding provides a dedicated funding source that can be used to implement safety projects identified in transportation safety plans.
- **Invest in repairing locally-owned bridges.** Counties own 38 percent of U.S. bridges. The BASICS Act ensures the bridge formula funding program established in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act reflects the critical role counties and local municipalities play in building and maintaining roads by directing bridge funding resources proportionally to locally owned bridges in the worst-condition.
- **Strengthen regional planning.** Created by Congress, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are required to develop the fiscally-constrained Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), update the long term Regional Transportation Plan, and work with local governments to identify and develop projects that meet federal performance goals. The BASICS Act would increase the very minimal amount of FHWA Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding that MPOs receive to complete these statutory planning mandates. The modest increase would allow MPOs to coordinate more closely with state DOTs and provide more support to local jurisdictions as projects move from planning to delivery
- **Ensure transparency and collaboration.** Federal transportation dollars must be accountable to taxpayers. The BASICS Act improves transparency by reinforcing collaboration across federal, state, regional, and local partners to ensure that local voices are heard and transportation investments reflect what communities need most. ODOT tends to be a good partner with us in collaborating on funding decisions, and this provision would prompt other state DOTs to provide a similar level of engagement with their MPOs.



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The BASICS Act is comprehensive transportation legislation supported by the Local Officials in Transportation (LOT) Coalition, representing more than 25,000 counties, cities, towns, MPOs, regional councils, and economic development organizations. Coalition members include the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), the National Association of Counties (NACO), the National League of Cities (NLC), and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO). This broad coalition reflects the nationwide recognition that local and regional governments must have a stronger voice and better tools in shaping federal transportation policy.

There is nothing more basic than local roads and bridges. By supporting the BASICS Act, you will help ensure that cities, counties, MPOs, including Metro have the resources they need to deliver transportation systems that connect our neighborhoods, support our local economies and serve our residents every single day.

JPACT asks that you sign on as a co-sponsor of the BASICS Act (H.R.7437) and that you reach out to the original sponsors of this bill, Representatives McDonald Rivet and Bresnahan to discuss how you can help support the BASICS Act in the next federal surface transportation reauthorization bill.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this request. Strengthening regional planning and empowering local decision-makers is essential to creating a safer transportation systems, more connected communities, and an economically prosperous future.

Sincerely,

[[CHAIR LEWIS SIGNATURE]]

Christine Lewis
Chair, Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation