



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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SENATE PASSES CRUCIAL TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

Known as "Connect Oregon II," the legislation will help build much-needed transportation network

SALEM- The Oregon Senate today passed House Bill 2278, legislation that builds on non-highway transportation efforts around the state to expand connections with rural and urban communities and combat transportation isolation in rural areas. The bill follows up "Connect Oregon," a transportation investment plan passed in the 2005 legislative session.

"Transportation is a major concern for my district and for all rural areas in Oregon," said Senator Joanne Verger (D- District 5). "Connection to other communities is the lifeblood of Oregon business."

House Bill 2278 authorizes the issuance of up to \$100 million in lottery bonds for grants for transportation projects. Projects are chosen by how they will improve access to jobs, result in economic benefit to the state, and connect elements of Oregon's transportation system. Air, marine, rail and public transport projects are eligible to apply for the grants.

"Everyone knows we need to invest in our transportation system," said Senator Rick Metsger (D-Mt. Hood). "Oregon's economy depends on it."

Oregon's non-highway transportation network includes 96 general aviation airports and one international airport; two major intercontinental railroads and 19 short-line railroads; and 23 deep and shallow draft ports.

Connect Oregon II is part of the Senate Democratic Agenda to bring economic security by investing in an improved transportation infrastructure.

House Bill 2278 will now move to the Governor's desk for his signature.