

Washington, D.C. — A Congressional Subcommittee has approved legislation funding a variety of important Oregon transportation projects Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) announced today. Blumenauer requested the funding earlier this year.

“At a time when Oregon’s economy is hurting, federal investment in our region is particularly important,” said Blumenauer. “If approved by Congress as expected later this year, the transportation funds in this bill will provide a much needed boost locally.”

Highlights of funding for the Portland region secured by Blumenauer include:

- \$69.75 million for Tri-Met’s Interstate MAX light rail extension to North Portland. The new line, which is expected to average over 18,000 weekday boardings, is scheduled to open in May of 2004.
- \$500,000 for Multnomah County for pre-construction work for a new bridge to Sauvie Island. The existing bridge was built in 1950 and has reached the end of its service life. Agricultural businesses are completely dependent on the current bridge for access to Portland markets and freight facilities.
- \$800,000 for Tri-Met’s Jobs Access Program. The program provides funding for transportation services for low-income Oregonians to commute to much-needed jobs.
- \$750,000 for Intelligent Transportation System research at Portland State University (PSU). The funding will provide support for the construction of the Intelligent Transportation Systems research center, part of PSU's NW Center for Engineering, Science, and Technology.
- \$1.5 million for Tri-Met to replace aging buses and bus-related facilities. The funding will be used to replace buses that average 16 years old and have traveled over 1 million miles.

The funds for these Oregon projects were included in the Fiscal Year 2004 Transportation-Treasury Appropriations bill, and approved by the House Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury and Independent Agencies on July 11. The full House Appropriations Committee is expected to approve the legislation next week with a vote by the House of Representatives later this month. The legislation must also be approved by the United States Senate.