



Middle Rogue
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Regional Transportation Planning

Gold Hill • Grants Pass • Rogue River • Jackson County • Josephine County • Oregon Department of Transportation

April 3, 2026

The Honorable Cliff Bentz, Congressman 2nd District
U.S. House of Representatives
1239 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Bentz,

On behalf of the Middle Rogue Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO), I urge 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.

The MRMPO helps direct federal transportation funding to the urbanized areas in Jackson and Josephine Counties, the cities of Grants Pass, Rogue River, and Gold Hill, Josephine Community Transit (JCT), and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), to improve safety, reduce congestion, and support economic growth for over 63,000 residents within the MRMPO planning area. What the BASICS Act does:

- Strengthens regional planning and uses federal dollars wisely. Created by Congress, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are responsible for developing fiscally constrained Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) that identify local priority projects that meet federal performance goals. The BASICS Act increases Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding so MPOs can meet growing federal requirements and deliver stronger plans and better project selection that reflects long-term community needs.
- Delivers regional priorities faster. The BASICS Act accelerates delivery of these regionally supported projects by increasing funding for the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program. As the most flexible federal transportation formula 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.
- Ensures 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 in the Grants Pass area need most.
- Focuses on road safety. With nearly 100 roadway deaths each day, the BASICS Act increases and protects funding for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). It also ensures that 25 percent of HSIP funds are delivered through MPOs for proven safety projects that build on the success of the Safe Streets and Roads for All program.

- Invests in repairing locally owned bridges. Counties own 38 percent of U.S. bridges. The BASICS Act ensures bridge funding reflects this reality by directing resources proportionally to locally owned bridges in each state. This means more support for repairing the worst-condition bridges in our communities.

The BASICS Act is 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 Development Organizations (NADO), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National League of Cities (NLC), and the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM). 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, and Metropolitan Planning Organizations, including the MRMPO, have the resources they need to deliver transportation systems that connect our neighborhoods, support our local economies and serve our residents every single day.

I ask you to reach out to the cosponsors 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.

Sincerely,

Wade Elliot
Chair, MRMPO Policy Committee



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April 3, 2026

The Honorable Jeff Merkley, Senator
U.S. Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Merkley,

On behalf of the Middle Rogue Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO), I urge 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.

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I ask you to reach out to the cosponsors of this bill, Representatives McDonald Rivet and Bresnahan to discuss how you can introduce a bipartisan Senate companion bill. Thank you for your leadership and consideration. Strengthening regional planning and empowering local decision makers is essential to creating a safer, more connected, and economically prosperous future.

Sincerely,

Wade Elliot
Chair, MRMPO Policy Committee



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April 3, 2026

The Honorable Ron Wyden, Senator
U.S. Senate
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden,

On behalf of the Middle Rogue Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO), I urge 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.

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