

## **Clackamas Review**

*Bernie stout*

*February 12, 2023*

I went on the grand opening ride of the Max Orange Line from Milwaukie to downtown Portland. The purpose of building this \$1.5 billion mass transit line in 2015 was to accommodate infill and density.

I did research on the TriMet site and was trying to adjust my thinking. On Jan. 31, I intended to go buy an annual transit pass at Pioneer Courthouse Square.

I started my morning listening to Multnomah County Circuit Judge Nan Waller speak on KBOO Radio. Waller serves as the judge for the Mental Health Court and manages the county court's Aid and Assist docket.

Once deemed unable to assist in their own defense, a suspect with mental health issues must be transferred for restoration within seven days. Oregon was found in violation of this basic right. In September 2022, Federal Judge Michael Mosman ordered the state to comply with the seven-day ruling, limiting the length of restoration in alignment with national trends. The Oregon State Hospital has begun discharging patients back to their communities under the new Mosman ruling.

After listening to the radio program, I boarded the Orange Line in Milwaukie about 11:15 a.m., sat down and watched the scenery out the window. Halfway into Portland, I started looking inside the light rail car. **I observed human waste on the ledge below the seat next to me. I saw urine, filth on most surfaces and garbage across from me.** I took pictures, which I texted to TriMet, and got off at Pioneer Courthouse Square.

**As I approached the water feature bridge and TriMet's office in the public square, the door swung open and a large black plastic bag came flying out, landing about 10 feet from me. A security guard shoved a man out and said, "You are banned for life." Other people inside seemed agitated by the incident.**

I reconsidered my purchase of an annual transit pass and instead purchased a \$20 transit card. I walked a couple of blocks and got on another MAX up to PSU, where there were people that were seemingly unconscious or asleep on the floor with their belongings. The train car was generally filthy.

On the Max train back to Milwaukie, the first thing I saw was a folded-up bench seat with used brown toilet paper hanging down. I texted these pictures to TriMet at 2:51 p.m.

The 7-Eleven store on Southeast Mcloughlin Boulevard across from the Milwaukie Max's last stop in Oak Grove has experienced increased thefts since the line opened.

Riders have to be ready, willing and able to use transit systems, but the number of officers and the amount of mental health interventions are not working. We need to invest more into a strategic plan and enforcement.

***ODOT's plan to toll Interstate 205 will only work if there is functional public transportation.*** I will not be returning to the Orange Line until this is addressed.