



February 9, 2015

The Honorable Mark Hass, Chair
Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Hass and Members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue:

The Port of Portland (Port) has long supported Metro's efforts to bring a Convention Center Hotel to Portland. As the operator of Oregon's largest airport, Portland International Airport (PDX), we understand the value such an amenity has for our tourism industry. In 2014, nearly 16 million passengers traveled through PDX. Approximately 3.1 million PDX passengers and \$1.8 billion in domestic and international visitor expenditures were attributed to the visitor industry, supporting an estimated 35,963 direct, induced and indirect jobs. Statewide tourism is a \$9.6 billion/per year industry, employing 93,000 people in Oregon. Tourism is an important industry for counties across the state, as tourism jobs make up a larger share of employment in Oregon's rural counties (~3% of jobs in urban areas, ~6% in rural areas). Revenue generated from tourism jobs allows the state to invest in other important public services, like education and public safety.

Metro has taken a leadership role in moving forward with the convention center hotel needed to capitalize on this robust industry that supports many businesses, small and large, across the region and state. The Port joins a broad array of stakeholders in supporting Senate Bill 64. This bill clarifies Metro's authority to issue bonds in support of this project and keeps the job-creating Oregon Convention Center Hotel project on track for completion.

The Oregon Convention Center Hotel is critical to Oregon's ability to compete nationally and internationally in attracting large conventions and major events. The hotel will attract between five and ten new, large conventions each year, supporting 2,000 construction jobs and more than 900 permanent hospitality and induced jobs. Convention-goers, on average, spend \$330/day in hotels, restaurants, and shopping. Every month we delay getting this hotel project completed, we lose additional convention groups and the spending these groups would bring to Oregon.

We urge your support of SB 64 and this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bill Wyatt'.

Bill Wyatt
Executive Director

Mission: To enhance the region's economy and quality of life
by providing efficient cargo and air passenger access
to national and global markets, and by promoting industrial development.

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