



Office of Mayor Charlie Hales
City of Portland

February 10, 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 Committee:

I am writing to you today to share the City of Portland's support for Senate Bill 64.

Passage of the bill will clarify that Metro's charter is the source of authority for issuing revenue bonds to be repaid by visitor taxes. This will allow them to proceed without further delay with the Oregon Convention Center Hotel project, a priority project for the Portland region.

The City of Portland, Multnomah County, and Metro have worked together over the past several years to move the Oregon Convention Center Hotel project forward. In Fall 2013, the City Council, Multnomah County Board, and Metro Council all supported amendments to the Visitor Facilities Intergovernmental Agreement between our three jurisdictions to allow for future transient lodging taxes collected at the proposed Oregon Convention Center Hotel to be used to support its construction. Your action is now needed to help Metro proceed to groundbreaking.

Tourism is an important industry in the state of Oregon and for the Portland area. The planned Oregon Convention Center Hotel project is critical to the continued strength of tourism and convention business in the region. The Oregon Convention Center Hotel will attract between five and ten new, large conventions each year, and is critical for Oregon's ability to attract other major events, like the NBA All-Star week or the NCAA Final Four. In the near term, the construction of the Oregon Convention Center Hotel will support 2,000 construction jobs and will support more than 900 permanent hospitality and induced jobs.

I urge you to support the swift passage of SB 64 and make the most of Oregon's investment in our tourism industry.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Charlie Hales
Mayor, City of Portland