



Office of Mayor Charlie Hales
City of Portland

February 26, 2015

The Honorable Brian Clem, Chair
House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use and Water
900 Court St NE, Hearing Room F

Dear Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

The City of Portland is an active participant in the Oregon Solutions' Columbia Corridor levee system project. Through these efforts, the City has been working with the Multnomah County Drainage District (MCDD) and other regional stakeholders to address the repair and accreditation of the Columbia River Levee System. The Columbia River Levee System is large and complex, and protects homes, businesses, parks and natural areas, industrial lands and many other important assets to our region.

Due to new federal policies for levee accreditation in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, these levees must be repaired and upgraded to meet Army Corps of Engineer standards for hundred-year flood protection. Without meeting this burden, the region runs the serious risk of losing access to flood insurance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

HB 2277 provides MCDD with the authority needed to fulfill Army Corps of Engineers obligations and help maintain access to the NFIP. The City of Portland worked closely with MCDD on an amendment to the bill that helps to clarify roles and encourage communication and cooperation between the local governments, the community and MCDD. At the time of submitting this letter, we have not received the final language from Legislative Counsel.

The City of Portland supports HB 2277, with the above mentioned amendment, and will continue to work with MCDD and other stakeholders to ensure safe, certified and accredited levees along the Columbia River.

Sincerely,

Charlie Hales
Mayor