



June 4, 2020

Senate President Peter Courtney, Co-Chair, Legislative Emergency Board  
Speaker of the House Tina Kotek, Co-Chair, Legislative Emergency Board  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97310

RE: Emergency funding for Metro visitor venues to support economic recovery

President Courtney, Speaker Kotek, and Members of the Emergency Board,

Thank you for your quick action on behalf of Oregon's diverse communities in response to the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis. Like you, our first concern at the Port of Portland has been the health and safety of the people depending on our facilities and the broader community. We appreciate and support your prioritization of public health, housing security and unemployment – all of which remain in a state of growing need.

The economic devastation has been massive and astonishingly swift, and our metrics at Portland International Airport reflect that. We estimate passenger volumes to be down 85 percent from where they were this time last year. For context, PDX is what's called an "origin and destination" airport. Meaning, people coming and going live here, work here or are visiting our great region. In that way, growth and decline at PDX is reflective of our regional economic health.

As thinking, planning and budgeting moves from response to recovery, it is key to support the venues that attract thousands of visitors to our region each year: the Oregon Convention Center, Oregon Zoo, Portland Expo Center, and Portland's 5 Centers for the Arts. To that end, we urge you to support Metro's \$20.7 million funding request to help keep these venues viable into the future.

When it comes to travel and events, we recognize that the future holds a new normal that is still evolving. In the most basic sense, the public health strategy *is* the economic response. However, we also know from past recessions that taking early steps to maintain the viability of economic engines is critical to our long-term recovery.

Thank you again for your service to Oregonians at this difficult time. We appreciate your leadership.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Keith Leavitt'.

Keith Leavitt  
Chief Commercial Officer  
Port of Portland