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Senator Chuck Riley  
Senate Committee on Business and Government  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: The City of Portland's support for SB 639**

Chair Riley and members of the committee:

Oregon voters passed Measure 91 in 2014 to legalize and regulate the sale and consumption of cannabis. However, there is a critical regulation gap that needs to be addressed: a legal and consistent regulatory framework for adults in Oregon to consume cannabis outside of their private residence. The City of Portland supported this concept in 2017 and we urge your support for SB 639 this legislative session. This testimony reflects the position of the City of Portland.

For years, cannabis prohibition has disproportionately affected underrepresented communities, especially communities of color, and the impacts of the enforcement and prosecution of cannabis consumption laws were shouldered heavily by racial minorities. By providing safe, legal, and regulated spaces for adults to consume cannabis, Oregon is not only ensuring that law enforcement can focus their efforts elsewhere but would make it much less likely that those same underrepresented communities would continue to be affected by current restrictions on public cannabis consumption.

A legal regulatory framework would also help vulnerable Oregonians - including people with disabilities and Veterans - who are Medical Marijuana patients but may not be able to consume their doctor-prescribed medication in their homes. Federal housing rules prohibit smoking and vaporizing in Section 8 housing, and landlords can restrict smoking and vaporizing within the home, even for medical cardholders.

SB 639 also addresses youth prevention concerns. Everyone agrees that the consumption of cannabis ought to take place away from children. This bill ensures that adults have a legal, regulated, and safe environment to join other adults in consuming a product that's been legal in Oregon for years.

This bill also makes it much easier for cannabis regulators like the City of Portland to provide clear, consistent guidance to event organizers, agency partners, and the public. To that end, the City issued guidance last year on how best to navigate the confusing laws and policies around consuming cannabis on private property in a group setting. SB 639 would help regulators by providing consistent statewide guidance that would apply in Portland as well any other Oregon city that decided to affirmatively opt-in

to cannabis consumption. That means only cities that voted to adopt this framework for the social consumption of cannabis would see cannabis events or permanent premises in their communities.

Oregon has an opportunity to build its brand of craft, local, sustainable cannabis during a time when many states don't have the benefit of developing a legal and regulated industry. Visitors to Oregon can purchase cannabis but may find themselves with no legal place to consume it. This bill would allow those tourist dollars to come to Oregon supporting local jobs, and building a brand for when the Federal government legalizes the regulation of cannabis across the U.S.

The economic opportunity is here for Oregon business owners to innovate and create business models for the social consumption of cannabis. And because this bill would allow adults to bring their own cannabis into a regulated space, business owners who may have an appropriate venue for parties, weddings, and other gatherings would benefit from this new legal industry with a lower barrier to entry than for a traditional cannabis business. This is an essential piece of this legislation.

We are including recommended considerations to bring greater clarity and address any unintended consequences that may negatively affect the community and/or public safety. As noted before, these considerations reflect the position of the City of Portland, not any one program or bureau. We are happy to participate in discussions to address these issues.

- Provisions of the Clean Indoor Air Act should be maintained. As drafted, this bill would conflict with that policy.
- Temporary events should be required to meet all local permitting requirements.
- SB 639 lacks specificity regarding temporary licenses being used at a single location. This has come up with alcohol licenses to avoid going through the annual licensing process. This loophole should be closed.
- Smoking lounges should be required to meet all provisions of Oregon's building code, just like any business.

The City has seen many cannabis events with consumption take place in Portland over the years, and while almost all of these events have been safe and highly controlled, having a statewide, consistent framework for cannabis consumption – both at events like these and at permanent premises – would help regulators more efficiently and effectively apply the rules, would give consumers more options, would help Oregon's craft cannabis industry, and would protect Oregon's most vulnerable populations, including youth and those who have been most negatively impacted by cannabis prohibition.

We urge your support for SB 639.

Thank you,



Brandon Goldner  
Supervisor, Cannabis Program  
City of Portland