



**Bureau of Planning and Sustainability**  
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March 26, 2019

Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair  
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
900 Court Street NE, HR C  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 48 and 929

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee,

The City of Portland supports SB 48 and SB 929 as measures to invest in the rehabilitation and reuse of Oregon's historic resources. In Portland, there are over 350 designated historic buildings constructed of unreinforced masonry that have not been seismically upgraded. Additionally, there are countless large houses in historic districts, former hotels in the central city, and commercial buildings on corridor streets that could be adapted for greater residential density. Similar buildings exist on main streets and in neighborhoods throughout the state. SB 48 and SB 929 will assist in local efforts to retrofit structurally-deficient buildings and expand housing opportunity in Oregon's historic landmarks and districts.

SB 48 extends the sunset for the Special Assessment of Historic Property Program, a 10-year property tax special assessment that applies to historic resources whose owners agree to complete substantial rehabilitation improvements. Established in 1975, the program has been a meaningful incentive to encourage private investment in structural, energy, accessibility and other upgrades to historic properties. Currently, 233 Portland properties are participating in Special Assessment.

SB 929 establishes a tax credit based on eligible expenses for owners of historic resources who complete rehabilitation improvements. The bill prioritizes projects that create or preserve workforce housing and for seismic retrofitting of unreinforced masonry buildings.

The City of Portland respectfully urges your support for SB 48 and SB 929. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joe Zehnder  
Interim Director

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