



CITY OF  
**PORTLAND, OREGON**

Ted Wheeler, Mayor  
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner  
Nick Fish, Commissioner  
Jo Ann Hardesty, Commissioner  
Chloe Eudaly, Commissioner

March 18, 2019

Representative Paul Evans  
House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2208

Chair Evans and Members of the Committee,

The City of Portland urges your support for HB 2208. This legislation establishes and capitalizes a statewide grant fund for seismic retrofits of unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings.

HB 2208 will create a tool to encourage seismic retrofits for structures that impact the public's safety, mobility, and recovery after an earthquake. Retrofitting URMs is often prohibitively expensive and tailored financial incentives are necessary to preserve and protect buildings and the people that occupy them. Additional tools are needed to support these necessary upgrades, especially for non-profits.

The effects of natural disasters are not evenly distributed, and low-income and vulnerable populations suffer a disproportionate share of losses. URM buildings that house low-income residents and provide community services will be essential to disaster recovery, but these structures have the greatest financial barriers to retrofitting.

Establishing a grant program, with eligibility open to for-profit and non-profit owned buildings, creates a critical incentive for the large number of non-governmental URM structures that will impact the public's life safety, mobility and recovery after a major earthquake. The City of Portland urges your support for HB 2208.

Sincerely,

Ted Wheeler  
Mayor

Amanda Fritz  
Commissioner

Nick Fish  
Commissioner

Jo Ann Hardesty  
Commissioner

Chloe Eudaly  
Commissioner