



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Innovation. Collaboration. Practical Solutions.

May 13, 2019

Senator Mark Hass, Chair
Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
900 Court Street NE, HR A
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 48

Dear Chair Hass and Members of the Committee,

The City of Portland supports SB 48 as a measure to invest in the rehabilitation and reuse of Oregon’s historic resources. In Portland, there are over 350 designated historic buildings that are built of unreinforced masonry construction and 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. SB 48 would meaningfully assist in local efforts to retrofit structurally-deficient buildings and expand housing opportunity in Portland’s most notable historic landmarks and districts.

SB 48 extends the sunset date 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.

The City of Portland encourages your support for SB 48. Without meaningful State financial support, the City of Portland will be limited in its ability to advance important life safety and housing goals for many of the state’s most significant historic buildings.

Sincerely,

Andrea Durbin
Director

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City of Portland, Oregon | Bureau of Planning and Sustainability | www.portlandoregon.gov/bps
1900 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 7100, Portland, OR 97201 | phone: 503-823-7700 | fax: 503-823-7800 | tty: 503-823-6868