



# CITY OF GRESHAM

February 7, 2020

House Committee on Water  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Se. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 4043

Dear Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

I write to express the City of Gresham's concerns with HB 4043, which would overly narrow local selection criteria for public water utilities, effectively preempting the authority of local jurisdictions to make decisions in the best interest their residents. While the cost of materials is an important criterion for selection, and one Gresham considers in the materials selection process, other criteria are also meaningful and important. The durability of piping materials, projected longevity of the infrastructure, and compatibility with existing infrastructure in a system are all examples of other important criteria.

HB 4043 overly and narrowly constrains the materials selection process by inappropriately putting the finger on the scale for a single factor, cost, to the detriment of other important factors. Local governments -the entities that actually build and operate water utilities- are best suited for decisions about the infrastructure materials they deploy within those utilities.

By analogy, this bill is similar to the federal government mandating that the Oregon use only concrete on state highways, when factors like traffic patterns, weather, and weight of vehicles traveling on the roadway could make asphalt advantageous. We urge the Committee to maintain local decision-making in materials selection.

Sincerely,

Eric Chambers  
Government Relations Director