

March 2, 2021

MMC

Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium

Mayor Lacey Beaty

City of Beaverton

Mayor Brian Hodson

City of Canby

Mayor Jeffrey Dalin

City of Cornelius

Mayor Gery Schirado

City of Durham

Mayor Brian Cooper

City of Fairview

Mayor Peter Truax

City of Forest Grove

Mayor Travis Stovall

City of Gresham

Mayor Tom Ellis

City of Happy Valley

Mayor Steve Callaway

City of Hillsboro

Mayor Ken Gibson

City of King City

Mayor Joe Buck

City of Lake Oswego

Mayor Mark Hardie

City of Maywood Park

Mayor Mark Gamba

City of Milwaukie

Mayor Teri Lenahan

City of North Plains

Mayor Ted Wheeler

City of Portland

Mayor Walt Williams

City of Rivergrove

Mayor Keith Mays

City of Sherwood

Mayor Jason Snider

City of Tigard

Mayor Randy Lauer

City of Troutdale

Mayor Frank Bubenik

City of Tualatin

Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle

City of Vancouver (ex officio)

Mayor Jules Walters

City of West Linn

Mayor Julie Fitzgerald

City of Wilsonville

Mayor Scott Harden

City of Wood Village

Senator Kayse Jama, Chair
Senator Dennis Linthicum, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Housing and Development

Re: Support for SB 330

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum and Members of the Committee,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium (MMC) represents the mayors of twenty-four cities in the Portland Metro Area, collectively home to over 1.7 million Oregonians. The MMC writes to express its support for SB 330, which would provide financial relief for landlords, and housing stability for tenants, by providing tax credits to landlord for forgiving rent.

Housing insecurity is a chronic issue in many MMC cities due to the high cost of housing in the metro region. Homelessness was a mounting problem for MMC cities before COVID-19, and the economic downturn produced by the pandemic has further increased the number of households vulnerable to homelessness. MMC cities are increasingly seeing homelessness that represents a variety of populations including families and youth. The economic hardships of COVID-19 have also disproportionately affected the low-income Oregonians and communities of color who were already struggling to make ends meet.

As mayors, we have mobilized our cities to provide financial assistance and services to those struggling to pay rent and utility bills, but the current level of need outweighs our cities' resources. We commend the state for taking action and implementing an eviction moratorium to help Oregonians remain in their homes, but when the moratorium ends, many renters will be left owing a year or more in unpaid rent without the resources to repay it. Meanwhile, many landlords have had to forgo a significant amount of rental income while still being required to pay mortgages and other expenses. SB 330 would allow landlords to receive an income tax credit for the amount of forgiven rent over a five-year period, providing them with a form of financial compensation while also providing tenants with immediate relief and reducing evictions.

As we explore strategies for economic recovery, it is crucial that the state and local governments work together to implement long-term solutions that contribute to the success and stability of all Oregonians. SB 330 is an important tool for protecting those most vulnerable to homelessness, as well as the landlords who provide affordable housing in our cities. The mayors of the MMC urge the committee's support for SB 330.

We appreciate the efforts made by the Oregon Legislature to keep families housed. Thank you for your leadership and your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium