



February 17, 2021

House Committee on Water  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: House Bill 3089 Establishes Public Drinking Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund.**

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Owens, Vice-Chair Reardon, Members of the House Committee on Water,

I am writing to share the City of Beaverton's support for House Bill 3089, which establishes a drinking water and sewer ratepayer assistance fund, administered by the Housing and Community Services Department.

Beaverton, like many cities during the COVID-19 pandemic, allocated funds to partner organizations to help residents in need of utility assistance during the pandemic. In Washington County, Community Action was that partner to help with ratepayers unable to pay their full bill. Fortunately, Washington County, through their CARES Act Funding, allocated almost \$2 million for rate payer assistance. But once the CARES Act Funding ceased, the onus will be on the City to continue funding for rate payer assistance through Community Action. In all, between cities and Tualatin Valley Water District, close to \$340,000 has been committed to Community Action for rate payer assistance in Washington County alone.

The creation of this fund would certainly help alleviate the burden from cities and water districts in the near term as our communities still need help with water and sewer utility payments. We also know the economic recovery of the region and the state will take time and additional investments. This fund will allow Community Action and other organizations across Oregon to receive grants to help meet community needs and in partnership with municipalities and water districts.

For these reasons, the City of Beaverton supports House Bill 3089. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick O'Claire". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Patrick O'Claire  
Finance Director