

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 Tammy Stempel**
City of Gladstone
- 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 McEnery-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

Representative Julie Fahey, Chair
 Representative Wlnsvey Campos, Vice-Chair
 Representative Lily Morgan, Vice-Chair
 House Committee on Housing

Re: Support for HB 2163

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Campos, Vice-Chair Morgan and Members of the Committee,

The Metropolitan Mayors’ Consortium (MMC) represents the mayors of twenty-five cities in the Portland Metro Area, collectively home to over 1.7 million Oregonians. The MMC writes to express its support for HB 2163, which establishes a long-term rent assistance program that will help Oregonians to maintain housing stability and avoid homelessness.

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 resources. One of the best ways to address homelessness is to help people remain in their affordable housing, and HB 2163 will do just that. With housing costs continuing to rise, particularly in our cities in the metro region, it’s becoming clear that some people are going to require long-term rental assistance to remain in their homes. The investments made by HB 2163 will benefit both low-income Oregonians and the communities they live in by improving housing stability across the state.

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. HB 2163 is a crucial tool for protecting those most vulnerable to homelessness. The mayors of the MMC urge the committee’s support for HB 2163 and 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