

February 24, 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 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 Anna Williams, Chair  
Representative Gary Leif, Vice-Chair  
Representative Ricki Ruiz, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

Re: Support for HB 2544

Dear Chair Williams, Vice-Chair Leif, Vice-Chair Ruiz 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 2544, which would create a DHS grant program for organizations that provide services to unaccompanied homeless youth.

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. Youth homelessness is known to be a primary entry point into chronic adult homelessness, which is why it is crucial for our nonprofit, local government and state partners to work together to increase accessibility to shelter facilities, outreach, and behavioral health and substance abuse services through Host Home programs and other transitional housing options.

Many MMC cities have been working alongside their local service providers to ensure services continue to be provided to our houseless youth population, many of whom are youth of color. However, resources for these organizations are scarce. For this reason, the mayors of the MMC support HB 2544's \$2.4 million investment to expand the host home programs that increase opportunities for homeless youth to be housed, which is proven to increase their success at school. We also support the bill's \$2 million investment to expand and enhance shelter and support services across the state.

The MMC urges the committee's support for HB 2544 and appreciates the efforts made by the Oregon Legislature to keep Oregonians housed. Thank you for your leadership and your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium