



March 24, 2023

To: House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Lewis & Tran, and Members of the Committee,

*Board Members*

*Bonnie Gee Yosick, Chair*

*Casey Mills, Vice Chair*

*Paul Agrimis*

*Ali Berman*

*C.N.E. Corbin*

*Mike Elliott*

*Adrienne Feldstein*

*Suenn Ho*

*Adam Lewis*

*Crys O'Grady*

*Alejandro Orizola*

*Elana Pirtle-Guiney*

*David Staczek*

*Sabrina Wilson*

*Erin Zollenkopf*

*Randy Gragg, Ex-Officio*

The Portland Parks Board is a volunteer board of a diverse group of residents from the City to Portland that advises the Portland City Council, the Parks Commissioner, and the Parks Director, as well as advocates for Portland parks on a city and region-wide basis. The Board submits this letter in support of House Bill 3515.

House Bill 3515 modifies Oregon's statutes pertaining to the creation of a Park and Recreation District to allow for an additional city council governance option for cities with populations over 600,000.

Portland's parks, natural areas, and recreational opportunities give beauty and life to Portland. Portland's parks provide welcoming places, programs, and services that improve community health and environment. Portland residents and visitors use and treasure their parks and parks programs. However, the Portland Park Bureau faces a significant maintenance backlog and needs stability in its funding options.

One of the options to achieve effective governance and financial stability is a Park and Recreation District. However, at present this option is limited for a large city, a city council is not allowed to be the governing body of such a district under current Oregon law (although a County Commission is allowed as a governing body if the park district is solely within that county).

House Bill 3515 expands governance options for Portland, but does not remove any existing governance options. It does not create a park and recreation special district, but allows the option for a city council and its citizens to create a parks district governed by the city council. Portland Parks and Recreation is looking for options to provide financial stability to support quality parks, natural areas, and recreational opportunities well into the future. House Bill 3515 helps to provide one such option.

*Sustaining a healthy park and recreation system to make Portland a great place to live, work, and play.*





Parks and recreation services are essential to the Portland community. The Board supports House Bill 3515 to modify the Park and Recreation District statute to allow for an additional city council governance option for cities with populations over 600,000 with the approval of the county in which the majority of the city lies if the district ballot measure includes a permanent rate for operating taxes.

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Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Gee Yosick  
Chair  
Portland Parks Board

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