

February 8, 2024

Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Manning, Vice-Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee,

The Port of Portland (Port) supports SB 1517. Nearly 40% of the Port's property is situated behind a 27-mile levee system that runs along the Columbia River from North Portland through Gresham, Fairview, and Troutdale. This area includes the Portland International Airport, the Troutdale Airport, the Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park, and other Port-owned properties. The levee system also protects over 59,000 jobs, \$16 billion in property, and a significant amount of open space.

In 2019, the Oregon legislature created the Urban Flood Safety & Water Quality District (UFSWQD) through SB 431. This measure proposed the use of a utility or service fee model to fund ongoing operations; however, after significant research and coordination with municipal partners, it was determined this model cannot realistically be implemented. As a result, alternative revenue tools are needed to operate and maintain this critical flood safety infrastructure.

The Port has taken an active role in the development of SB 1517, which will provide the UFSWQD with two necessary financial tools: 1) collection of property assessments in the managed floodplain and 2) a district-wide intergovernmental flood safety benefit fee. These revenue sources will equitably allocate the costs of flood management along the Columbia Corridor to all the beneficiaries of the levee system and be used for ongoing operations and maintenance to meet long-term flood safety needs.

Establishing reliable on-going revenue sufficient to support infrastructure that protects people and property from flood risk; and contributes to improved water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, floodplain restoration and landscape resilience is an issue of statewide concern with economic implications that touch every corner of Oregon.

For these reasons, the Port urges your support for SB 1517.

Sincerely,



Curtis Robinhold  
Executive Director