



February 12, 2024

Chair Nathanson, Vice-chairs Walters, Reschke, and members of the committee on Revenue,

My name is Kathy Knock and I am writing today on behalf of City of Salem employees, AFSCME Local 2067 in support of HB 4072. Our local membership includes 640 employees working in the Salem Housing Authority, Salem Police Department Support Services, Salem Public Library, Park Maintenance, Vehicle and Building Maintenance, IT support, Planning and Development services, Code Compliance, Water and Wastewater Treatment, Traffic Signals and Street Maintenance. We provide the services that keep the City running and are proud public servants.

Having recently been appointed to the City's Revenue Task Force, I am acutely aware of the laws that have restricted the City's ability to keep pace with costs over the past 30 years. We are now at a breaking point. Without additional revenue, the City will continue to face cuts in vital services. The current options for budget cuts include:

- Close 6 of 11 fire stations or
- Reduce the police force by 20% or
- Eliminate all park maintenance and permanently close the Library

The City struggles repeatedly with multiple failed recruitments in key positions that leave these positions vacant for over a year, including:

- System technicians who maintain the City's water pumps and controls
- Wastewater operators who monitor the waste treatment at Willow Lake
- Signal technicians who maintain traffic controls.

Our members are working mandatory overtime for months at a time. For example:

- The Wastewater Operators are currently doing mandatory double shifts, often working 10-hour shifts with only 6 hours between shifts. That means critical services are often performed by people who have only had 3-4 hours of sleep.
- The Police Records Technicians who provide direct support to police officers 24/7 are barely able to maintain minimum staffing. This often requires mandatory overtime when someone is sick or takes vacation.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for this bill and urge the committee to vote yes on HB 4072.

Kathy Knock
AFSCME 2067 President
Salem, Oregon