

Testimony of Anneliese Koehler Legislative Affairs Manager
In Support of Senate Bill 99
Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
February 19, 2025



Metro is the elected regional government that serves nearly 1.7 million people in the 24 cities and three counties of the Portland metropolitan area. We provide a broad range of public services that includes land use and transportation planning, solid waste and recycling operations, management of parks and natural areas, and operation of major visitor facilities like the Oregon Convention Center and the Oregon Zoo.

Since 2014, Metro has coordinated the efforts of the Oregon Brownfields Coalition, a diverse alliance of more than 50 partners from the public, private and nonprofit sectors united by a desire to advance solutions that can return Oregon's thousands of contaminated sites to productive use. At Metro, one impetus behind this effort is the desire to make the most efficient use of our existing urban land. Another is the potential benefit of converting sites that are degrading the economic and environmental health of their surrounding neighborhoods into assets that build prosperity and community.

Brownfields vary widely in size, setting, complexity and redevelopment potential. There is no single tool that will address all of them, which is why the Brownfields Coalition has pursued a variety of policy and funding proposals. Past successes include:

- 2015: Recapitalization of Business Oregon's Brownfields Redevelopment Fund
- 2015: Passage of HB 2734, authorizing local governments to create brownfields land bank authorities
- 2016: Passage of HB 4084, authorizing local governments to offer property tax incentives for brownfield cleanup and redevelopment
- 2019: Recapitalization of Business Oregon's Brownfields Redevelopment Fund (funding rescinded when lottery bond sale was cancelled)
- 2021: Recapitalization of Business Oregon's Brownfields Redevelopment Fund and the creation and capitalization of the Brownfields Properties Revitalization Fund

SB 99 extends the sunset on a critical tool created in 2016 by giving local governments the ability to offer property tax incentives for brownfield cleanup and redevelopment. As a result, local governments have a tool they can utilize to offset the high costs of remediation that often are the barriers to redevelopment. This optional tool has built in flexibility that allows local jurisdictions to create the program that matches the unique needs of their communities.

Brownfield remediation is costly, time-intensive and necessary to create the housing and jobs we need in Oregon. Multiple policy and funding solutions are needed to fully address the thousands of sites throughout the Metro region and our state. SB 99 is one solution that we need. Metro supports SB 99 and urges you to move this forward.