

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

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 McEnerny-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

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