

MMC
**Metropolitan
Mayors'
Consortium**

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

Representative Ken Helm, Chair
Representative Jeff Reardon, Vice-Chair
Representative Mark Owens, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Water

Re: Support for HB 3089

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Reardon, Vice-Chair Owens 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 3089, which would establish a drinking water and sewer rate assistance program.

Utility cost burden was already a growing issue in our communities, and it has been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Water and sewer are essential services, and they place a significant cost burden on many of our low-income residents who have also been disproportionately impacted by COVID. While there are state- and federal-funded low-income assistance and weatherization programs for home heating, there are no state or federal programs for water or sewer assistance. The mayors of the MMC are deeply concerned about the ability of our residents to pay their water and sewer bills, and about the resulting impacts on housing stability in our cities.

In response to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, many MMC cities have offered assistance to ratepayers and stopped disconnections due to nonpayment. However, cities are experiencing significant budget challenges of their own, and this is not a sustainable path forward for local governments, utilities, or ratepayers. The mayors of the MMC support HB 3089 because it will provide the funding and framework needed to get financial assistance to those in need.

The mayors of the MMC urge the committee's support for HB 3089 and appreciate the efforts made by the Oregon Legislature to improve quality of life for those who need it most. Thank you for your leadership and your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium