

**Testimony of Randy Tucker, Legislative Affairs Manager
In Support of Senate Bill 431 (with the -2 amendment)
Senate Committee on Environment & Natural Resources
April 4, 2019**



Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

As you know, Metro is the regional government 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.

The Metro Council strongly supports enactment of SB 431, as amended with the -2 amendment before you today. This bill would create a new “Urban Flood Safety and Water Quality District” aimed at protecting the significant assets along the Columbia Corridor in urban Multnomah County. The region and the state are highly dependent upon the flood management system along the Columbia River to protect such facilities as Portland International Airport, the Air National Guard, Portland’s water supply source and 48,000 jobs producing \$16 billion of economic activity.

In addition to the strong economic case for creating this District, there is an important social and environmental mandate since there are 7,400 residents living behind the levees, including many vulnerable populations. Further, while development over the past decades has been at the expense of wildlife habitat, there remain numerous acres and species that deserve to see some habitat restoration.

From Metro’s perspective, we operate the Expo Center, Blue Lake Park, the James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp and Chinook Landing Marine Park, all of which would be impacted in the case of a flood. Furthermore, as the steward of the region’s land use plan, we note that this area includes a significant share of the region’s vacant, developable industrial land, which we are relying on to provide further economic benefits in the future.

In conclusion, we would urge you to support SB 431 with the -2 amendment. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.