

Testimony of Metro Councilor Christine Lewis
On House Bill 5030
Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
April 19, 2019



Co-chairs Girod and Holvey and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Metro Council, I am writing to urge you to fully fund the request for \$14,422,200 to repair and reopen the Willamette Falls Locks as part of HB 5030.

Together with the state of Oregon, local governments and private businesses, Metro has long supported the repair and reopening of the Locks. We are committed to continued partnership with the State of Oregon and other government partners to take advantage of this opportunity to transfer the ownership of the Locks away from the US Army Corps of Engineers for the benefit of Oregonians. While our region will benefit from the project, benefits will also be realized upriver from Metro, in Yamhill and Marion Counties.

The benefits of repairing and reopening the Locks have been well documented. Metro is especially interested in the economic benefits for transportation, as well as the environmental benefits of removing truck trips from congested roadways in favor of “greener” transportation by barge.

The economic benefits from recreational tourism are also important, and our own residents benefit from reopening the Locks as well with greater access to the river. As HB 5030 itself notes, reopening the Locks will support the Willamette River’s designation as a National Water Trail (one of only 20 nationwide) and an American Heritage River for commerce, recreation and tourism.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.