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Representative John Lively
House Committee on Economic Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 2233-3

Chair Lively and Members of the Committee:

The City of Portland recently submitted testimony in support SB 693 that would create a similar - but not identical - regulatory framework for the social consumption of cannabis in Oregon. We believe strongly that adults in Oregon ought to have a legal, regulated place to consume cannabis outside of the home. Therefore, while the two bills are not identical, many of the arguments in favor of such a framework are the same, and we feel it's important to share those arguments with your committee with respect to HB 2233 and the -3 amendment.

Oregon voters passed Measure 91 in 2014 to legalize and regulate the sale and consumption of cannabis. However, there is a critical regulation gap that needs to be addressed: a legal and consistent regulatory framework for adults in Oregon to consume cannabis outside of their private residence. The City of Portland supports HB 2233-3 and the legislative effort to address this regulation gap.

For years, cannabis prohibition has disproportionately affected underrepresented communities, especially communities of color, and the impacts of the enforcement and prosecution of cannabis consumption laws were shouldered heavily by racial minorities. By providing safe, legal, and regulated spaces for adults to consume cannabis, Oregon is not only ensuring that law enforcement can focus their efforts elsewhere but would make it much less likely that those same underrepresented communities would continue to be affected by current restrictions on public cannabis consumption.

A legal regulatory framework would also help vulnerable Oregonians - including people with disabilities and Veterans - who are Medical Marijuana patients but may not be able to consume their doctor-prescribed medication in their homes. Federal housing rules prohibit smoking and vaporizing in Section 8 housing, and landlords can restrict smoking and vaporizing within the home, even for medical cardholders.

HB 2233-3 also addresses youth prevention concerns. Everyone agrees that the consumption of cannabis ought to take place away from children. This bill ensures that adults have a legal, regulated, and safe environment to join other adults in consuming a product that's been legal in Oregon for years.

This bill also makes it much easier for cannabis regulators like the City of Portland to provide clear, consistent guidance to event organizers, agency partners, and the public. To that end, the City issued guidance last year on how best to navigate the confusing laws and policies around consuming cannabis on private property in a group setting. HB 2233-3 would help regulators by providing consistent statewide guidance that would apply in Portland as well any other Oregon city that decided to affirmatively opt-in to cannabis consumption. That means only cities that voted to adopt this framework for the social consumption of cannabis would see cannabis events or permanent premises in their communities.

Oregon has an opportunity to build its brand of craft, local, sustainable cannabis during a time when many states don't have the benefit of developing a legal and regulated industry. Visitors to Oregon can purchase cannabis but may find themselves with no legal place to consume it. This bill would allow those tourist dollars to come to Oregon supporting local jobs, and building a brand for when the Federal government legalizes the regulation of cannabis across the U.S.

The economic opportunity is here for Oregon business owners to innovate and create business models for the social consumption of cannabis.

We are including the following recommended consideration to provide greater economic opportunity to business owners with less access to capital and resources. We are happy to participate in discussions to address this concern.

- This bill does NOT allow adults to bring their own cannabis into a regulated space. This means that business owners who may have an appropriate venue for parties, weddings, and other gatherings would NOT be able to benefit from this new legal industry with a lower barrier to entry than for a traditional cannabis business.

The City has seen many cannabis events with consumption take place in Portland over the years, and while almost all of these events have been safe and highly controlled, having a statewide, consistent framework for cannabis consumption – both at events like these and at permanent premises – would help regulators more efficiently and effectively apply the rules, would give consumers more options, would help Oregon's craft cannabis industry, and would protect Oregon's most vulnerable populations, including youth and those who have been most negatively impacted by cannabis prohibition.

We urge your support for HB 2233-3.

Thank you,



Brandon Goldner
Supervisor, Cannabis Program
City of Portland