

**Testimony of Anneliese Koehler, State and Regional Affairs Advisor
On House Bill 2674
House Committee on Energy and Environment
March 3, 2021**



Metro is the elected regional government that serves nearly 1.7 million people in the 24 cities and three counties 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, housing and homeless services, management of parks and natural areas, and operation of major visitor facilities like the Oregon Convention Center and the Oregon Zoo.

Metro supports HB 2674's high level goal of providing funding to support the reduction of emissions from diesel engines. The health and environmental effects of diesel emissions have been the subject of extensive research throughout the world. Health experts have concluded that diesel exhaust is a known human carcinogen at exposure levels seen in many parts of Oregon and particularly the Portland metropolitan region. These levels of exposure can also lead to increased risk of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, especially in children and the elderly, and low-income residents and communities of color often suffer higher levels of exposure than the population as a whole. Diesel emissions also include black carbon, which is a potent contributor to climate change.

Reducing greenhouse gases and diesel particulate emissions is a goal of Metro's Regional Waste Plan (RWP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Our region's Climate Smart Strategy also calls for reducing emissions from all transportation sources, including diesel. Strategies like those advanced in HB 2674 align with Metro's legislative priorities by providing funding to support the upgrading of fleets to newer, cleaner-burning engines, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We are concerned about one provision of the -1 amendments. Section 18 pre-empts local governments from establishing similar taxes unless authorized in statute or already enacted. Metro opposes this section. Continual erosion of local governments' ability to raise revenue leaves us with even fewer tools in an already light toolbox and further hampers our ability to reach our shared goals of addressing diesel exhaust, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. Metro urges you to remove Section 18 from HB 2674.

Thank you very much for considering these comments.