

February 9, 2021

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 McEnery-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 Paul Holvey, Chair
Representative Daniel Bonham, Vice-Chair
Representative Dacia Grayber, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Business & Labor

Re: Support for HB 2343

Dear Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Bonham and Grayber and Members of the Committee:

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium (MMC) represents the mayors of 25 cities in the Portland Metro Area, collectively home to over 1.7 million Oregonians. The MMC supports HB 2343, which would provide local governments participating in Enterprise Zones Programs with the temporary authority to suspend Enterprise Zone employment requirements in situations where employers can demonstrate that workforce curtailments are a result of the COVID-19 public health crisis and related economic impacts.

The Enterprise Zone program is a critical economic development tool for multiple MMC cities, attracting and expanding traded sector companies and jobs. Eligibility for the property tax abatement includes certain thresholds for hiring and retaining workers.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting Executive Orders and public health restrictions have caused unprecedented challenges for a number of employers located in MMC cities that receive these Enterprise Zone abatements, including supply chain disruption, decreases in sales, new facility protocols and reduction in output. Due to these unpredictable challenges, employers in our cities have been forced to lay off employees, in some cases dropping companies below the employment thresholds required for them to maintain the tax abatements provided by the Enterprise Zone program.

The mayors of the MMC ask the House Business & Labor Committee to support HB 2343 to provide this much needed temporary authority to local governments to suspend the Enterprise Zone employment requirements in situations where employers can demonstrate that workforce curtailments are a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic impacts. Without this temporary suspension, some companies in MMC cities will be subject to penalties and back taxes that will further jeopardize their ability to rehire and retain workers in our communities.

Sincerely,

The Metropolitan Mayors Consortium