

Dear Members of the House Revenue Committee:

I support HB 2447, the extension of the special assessment program for historic property. This is Oregon's only incentive for the maintenance and restoration of historic properties. While it is not the best match for the current economic situation, Oregon should provide some form of incentive for historic and cultural properties, which are often the lowest cost options for both residential and commercial tenants and owners. It has been used in the past to rehabilitate many important properties related to Oregon's history.

Before the current program is allowed to sunset, I urge the legislature to establish a task force/working group to look to more appropriate incentives, including the much stronger programs available in other states. While Oregon was one of the early adopters of historic incentives, many states now have programs that recognize broader objectives, including sustainability, equity, affordability and earthquake preparedness. Oregon should step to the front again, but it should have some incentive program in place now while it finds new and more inclusive strategies.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Steve Dotterer