



CITY OF PORTLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 613, Portland, Oregon 97204 ■ Mingus Mapps, Commissioner ■ Michael Jordan, Director

February 24, 2021

Representative Paul Holvey, Chair
House Business and Labor Committee
900 Court St. NE, HR E
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee,

The City of Portland supports HB 2377 to hold polluters responsible for environmental cleanup costs. This bill is a critical tool to secure funds from responsible parties to remedy the Portland Harbor Superfund Site even if the company has formally dissolved.

In many instances environmental contamination is the result of historical operations. This is common throughout the state but is particularly well illustrated in the Portland Harbor Superfund Site where pollution was released during more than 100 years of industrial operations. Over time, companies responsible for this contamination have dissolved but most companies were insured, and those insurance funds can – and should – contribute towards today's cleanup.

If the loophole that allows some insurance companies off the hook isn't closed, the gap between the funds needed for the cleanup and the funds available from the responsible parties widens. That causes pressure on public entities to use taxpayer dollars to close the gap, shifting the costs of cleanup to the community, including low-income and BIPOC communities that continue to be disproportionately harmed by the contamination. The City continues to push to get Portland Harbor cleaned up and HB 2377 brings funding to the table from the right place – from the assets of the polluters.

Funding environmental cleanup contributes to our tax base, provides jobs, addresses longstanding environmental justice inequities, improves neighborhood livability, and protects human health and the environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. We urge your support of HB 2377. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Eric Noll at eric.noll@portlandoregon.gov or at 503-823-6726.

Sincerely,

Michael Jordan
Director