

**Testimony of Randy Tucker, Legislative Affairs Manager
In Support of House Bill 2698
House Committee on Business and Labor
March 1, 2021**



Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

Metro is the regional government of the Portland metropolitan area, with major responsibility for managing the region's solid waste and providing opportunities for recycling and waste reduction. We serve a population of almost 1.7 million, providing services and educational resources that protect the environment and reduce the amount and toxicity of the solid waste stream.

Metro strongly supports House Bill 2698, which would enable consumers to repair or find repair services for their electronic devices. Right to repair legislation offers significant benefits to consumers, Oregon's local economy and the environment.

Oregonians are fortunate to have the Oregon E-Cycles program, which enables residents to recycle items like computers and TVs. However, cell phones and many other electronic devices are not covered. Moreover, the program does not address repair, which can prolong the use of consumer electronic devices and thereby reduce the stream of electronic waste that is eventually discarded or recycled.

Consumers currently lack easy and affordable access to the resources they need to perform simple repairs like a battery replacement. Independent repair shops often struggle to find the right schematics or parts necessary for repairing their customers' devices. Low-income Oregonians often cannot afford the high cost of replacing devices whenever a small problem arises or a product falls out of manufacturer warranty. Many struggle to afford the laptops or smartphones their families need to access the internet at home – which, as we have learned over the last year, provides an essential lifeline to work and school. Right to repair legislation would improve equitable access to technology for everyone, including communities of color and people living in rural areas.

While recycling conserves natural resources and reduces pollution, reuse and repair often result in the highest environmental and economic benefits. Maintaining products in their original form and delaying or preventing the purchase of new items minimizes resource consumption and saves the embodied energy used to make the original product. As technology continues to advance rapidly, Metro supports efforts to keep consumer electronic devices in use as long as possible.

HB 2698 offers an opportunity for Oregon to lead in establishing strong environmental policy that will benefit consumers and strengthen local economies. Right to repair legislation also aligns with Metro's regional priorities for waste reduction and equity. We urge you to move it forward.