

January 30, 2023

Senate Committee on Housing and Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for SB 799

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the Committee,

Metro supports SB 799.

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.

In recent years, Metro partnered with stakeholders to ask voters to support housing for our region's vulnerable community members. Historically, local systems of homeless services and affordable housing have been deeply underfunded compared to the funding that is needed. In 2018, Metro voters approved an affordable housing bond that will have generated over \$650 million with the goal of creating homes for approximately 12,000 people through the creation of 3,900 affordable homes. In May 2020, voters in greater Portland approved a Supportive Housing Services measure to fund services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The measure creates a 1% marginal tax on high-income earners living within Metro's jurisdiction as well as nonresidents who receive income sourced within the Metro jurisdiction. It also collects a 1% tax on net income from businesses within Metro's jurisdiction who have over \$5 million in gross receipts from both within and outside the Metro jurisdiction. The tax sunsets after 10 years.

Funds from the SHS measure can be used for supportive services such as outreach and emergency shelter, placement into housing and help paying rent, advocacy and case management and services in the areas of mental health, physical health, language and culture needs, education, employment, addiction and recovery, tenant rights and others. The goals for the 10-year fund are to connect 5,000 chronically homeless households with supportive housing and stabilize 10,000 households at risk of or experiencing homelessness in permanent housing.

In the first year of our SHS measure, Metro has distributed over \$200 million to our county partners who have help achieved the following progress towards our goals:

- Over 1600 people stabilized in permanent housing. 691 more are in housing search.
- 512 new year-round shelter beds added.
- Over 9,000 people received eviction prevention support
- In Multnomah County, 159 people were employed through new employment programs.

In the last couple of years since Metro's voters brought us into the affordable housing and supportive housing space, we know that this housing and homelessness crisis will continue to be exacerbated if we cannot stabilize folks in their current homes and stop the inflow of folks into homelessness. This is why we need SB 799. SB 799 would strengthen eviction protections for tenants and allow them more opportunities to stay in their homes.

We urge your support.

Sincerely,

Jenna Jones
State and Regional Affairs Advisor
Metro