

**Testimony of Anneliese Koehler, Legislative Affairs Manager
In Support of House Bill 3250**

**House Committee on Economic Development and Small
Business**

March 23, 2023



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, management of parks and natural areas, housing and homeless services, and operation of major visitor facilities like the Oregon Convention Center, the Portland Expo Center and the Oregon Zoo.

Metro Council and the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission recently evaluated potential opportunities for the 53-acre Expo Center located in North Portland. As a result of this work, they recognized Oregon's status as an international powerhouse in the sport and outdoor industry and have directed staff to align Expo's future redevelopment as a community-centric destination venue that prioritizes amateur, professional, and recreational sports.

In doing this, Metro will evaluate opportunities consistent with HB3250, which includes, among other things, partnering with Sport Oregon and other sports organizations on a market and feasibility study to examine how Expo can best pivot its operations toward a sports facility as a primary market, with other uses such as consumer, live entertainment, and community events as secondary markets.

As part of Expo's future, Metro fully supports the Task Force described in HB3250 and the potential future use of Expo to include many of the activities and opportunities described in the bill. We will gladly partner with the Task Force and other groups in sharing our work at Expo, opportunities for research, demonstration, and education, along with the types of sports and outdoor activities that have come to signify Oregon as the most conducive location in North America for the athletics, team sports, outdoor activities and recreation economy.