



CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

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**Portlanders need their parks and recreation facilities,
and we need your support!**

House Bill 3515 modifies the Park and Recreation District statute to allow for an additional city council governance option for cities with populations over 600,000.

Portland Parks & Recreation works to provide welcoming places, programs and services that improve community health and our environment. To provide these services, Portland's park system needs effective governance and funding options.

Park and recreation districts can be an effective governance and a stable funding option to provide critical park and recreation services, but they are limited in being an effective option for cities because a city council is not allowed to be the governing body under current Oregon law.

Under current Oregon statutes, a County Commission can be the governing body for a park and recreation district solely within a county. House Bill 3515 is modeled after a similar update that Washington legislators passed in 2002, which was then utilized by Seattle voters to create a Seattle Park District in 2014.

This proposed bill aims to expand governance options for Portland, but does not remove any existing governance options, and does not create a park and recreation special district. Because this proposed bill is not creating a special district, there are no funding implications for this bill.

We know parks and recreation services are essential to the Portland community! We support House Bill 3515 to modify the Park and Recreation District statute to allow for an additional city council governance option for cities with populations over 600,000 with the approval of the county in which the majority of the city lies if the district ballot measure includes a permanent rate for operating taxes.

Endorsed by:



African Youth & Community Organization (AYCO) is a culturally specific, community-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization led by and for the East African immigrant and refugee community in the Portland Metropolitan Area. Our mission is to settle the past, engage the present, and hope for the future. AYCO supports and empowers East African immigrants and families who have fled intense political turmoil in their home countries and are working to integrate into life in Portland while recovering from trauma and loss.

In total, AYCO is proud to offer more than 17 unique programs—including a culturally-specific childcare center that is in the middle of a massive expansion as part of a well-underway capital campaign to renovate our new organization headquarters. In total, we serve between 15,000 and 25,000 East African immigrants each year. Through our programs, we work to empower newcomers in the Metro area to connect with service providers and resources that will eliminate barriers to educational, professional, and personal growth. AYCO programming is meant to uplift the community we serve, strengthening cultural identity and building a bridge toward hope for the future.

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