

**Testimony of Anneliese Koehler, Legislative Affairs Manager**  
**Testimony in Support of HB 4041**  
**House Economic Development and Small Business**  
**February 8, 2024**



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.

Metro supports House Bill 4041 which provides additional funding for the Economic Equity Investment Program. This critical program provides grants to culturally-responsive, community-based organizations to help Oregon families build generational wealth and economic stability.

Metro's 2024 Legislative Principles call for supporting programs and policies that advance racial diversity, equity and inclusion. Specifically, Metro envisions a region and state where a person's race, ethnicity or zip code does not predict their future prospects, and where all residents can enjoy economic opportunity and quality of life. Metro therefore supports legislation that acknowledges past discrimination, addresses current disparities, and promotes inclusion in public programs, services, facilities and policies.

By providing programs that advance homeownership, small business support, and workforce development opportunities, the Economic Equity Investment Program will help close the wealth gap for Oregonians across our state and in our region. Metro urges the Legislature to pass HB 4041 and provide much-needed solutions to promote economic growth and stability for all Oregonians.