

March 6, 2024

TO: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction

FROM: Jonathan Harker, AICP, Member Oregon American Planning Association,  
Residing in SD 23 and HD 45

RE: Support of Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)  
Budget Requests to be Included in SB 5701

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Fred Girod and Representative Paul Holvey and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am writing to request that you include in your recommendations for SB 5701 two budget requests that I understand DLCD has made to the Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO) with the Governor's office approval. These two requests are:

1. A general fund request of \$607,000 to address DLCD's Agency Restructuring from Level 6 to Level 5. The funding would be used to add 1 new Deputy Director position as a business operation administrator and re-class 9 existing positions. This was necessitated as DLCD's total funds have increased by 98% and total positions by 33% since the 2017-19 fiscal year.

**This funding is included in introduced SB 5701 (Section 57) and I am asking that it remain in the bill.**

2. A general fund request of \$1,600,000 to address a general fund shortfall. DLCD has made this request as it has had unexpected expenses for reasons such as having to offer larger than expected starting salaries to successfully recruit for new positions and insufficient funding from the funding provided in the 2023 Session to cover cost-of-living increases. This shortfall will impact DLCD's abilities to support their core work as well as legislative directives on housing, community green infrastructure and solar energy siting.

It is my understating that funding in the 2023-25 LAB assumed sufficient for COLAs and hiring qualified staff did not actually square with the realities of hiring new employees at the proper experience level or of covering personnel costs. **This has not been included in SB 5701 and I am asking that it be added to SB 5701.**

I am a retired city planner having worked for the City of Gresham for nearly the last 30 years of my career. I had a variety of planning roles in my time at Gresham including development planning, long range planning, housing planning, UGB expansion area planning and as the comprehensive planning manager. At I retirement I was the Cit's Urban Design and Planning Director.

In retirement I have been active with the Oregon chapter of the American Planning Association's (OAPA) Legislative Policy Affairs Committee (LPAC). Most recently I served on DLCD'S Rule Advisory Committee (RAC) for the Climate Friendly & Equitable Communities (CFEC) rulemaking.

As a former planning director for the fourth largest City in Oregon I understand the critical nexus between having adequate funding and being able to preform the work needed to support a community and meet the desires of elected officials. My recently service on the CFEC RAC reminded me of the critical role that DLCD has in supporting local jurisdictions as they do the work needed to support their communities. The success of Oregon's statewide Planning Program is built on the partnership of the agency and its commission has with local jurisdictions. **Please ensure that DLCD can successfully maintain this partnership by including these two funding requests in SB 5701.**

Thank you.