



League of Oregon Cities (Michael Martin)

March 27, 2025

Joint Committee On Transportation  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem Oregon 97301

**RE: Testimony on Senate Bill 357**

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Vice Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis, and Committee Members:

The League of Oregon Cities (LOC) respectfully submits this letter in opposition to Senate Bill 357, which would allow ports to unilaterally assess public bodies, including cities, for a portion of sediment removal costs from port waters. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 357, which appears to be identical to SB 949 from the 2023 Session (which we opposed).

While we recognize the importance of maintaining port infrastructure, this bill raises several challenges:

1. **Cities do not control sediment sources.** Much of the material passing through city-owned culverts comes from upstream, natural erosion, or federal land—factors outside local control.
2. **The assessment process lacks transparency and due process.** Cities could be required to pay fees without consultation, collaboration, or a formal way to dispute the charge.
3. **The cost-sharing method is arbitrary.** Dividing costs evenly among public bodies does not reflect their actual contribution to sediment buildup and could unfairly burden smaller communities.
4. **This shifts regional costs to local budgets.** Ports serve statewide and even national interests. Asking local governments to fund dredging puts pressure on already limited city resources.

We're committed to working with ports and the Legislature on collaborative solutions but respectfully ask that SB 357 not move forward in its current form.

Respectfully,  
Michael Martin (League of Oregon Cities)