



## **River Assets and Opportunities Task Force** ***Founded 2017***

To Legislative Review Committees:

This letter is written in support of the Willamette Falls Locks Authority who are seeking continued appropriations for successful opening of Willamette Falls Locks (HB 2574) , a state-sanctioned project.

We are the River Assets and Opportunities Task Force representing over 7 cities and 20 commercial and nonprofit education and tourism providers. Our mission is to encourage cities and other entities to work together on behalf of the Willamette River and its economic development and tourism opportunities.

We are the largest cooperative organization of this type in Oregon and working specifically to support a couple project including the restoration and opening of Willamette Falls Locks. Our members including the Portland Spirit organization, Willamette Queen sternwheeler, and cities of West Linn, Oregon City, and Lake Oswego specifically participated in developing tour and economic strategies utilizing Willamette Falls Locks since 2015.

We see opportunities for large and small scale private and public sector tourism organizations to create markets for routine uses of Willamette Falls Locks that would ultimately open up the Willamette River from the Columbia all the way to Salem and Albany. Our members have the professional marketing ability and expertise to make routine utilizations of the Locks not only probable but more than feasible. Some of our members also operate commercial dock building, channel maintenance and other businesses that could provide heavier tonnage usages of the Locks that were typical of the past.

We hope you can support their request which we believe is coming at a crucial time for the success of our Willamette River and Oregon.

Sincerely,

Kent Ziegler

Chairman