



MAYOR KEITH WILSON

March 31, 2025

Joint Committee on Transportation
Oregon State Capitol Building
900 Court Street NE, Hearing Room F
Salem, OR 97301

Co-Chair Gorsek and McLain, Vice Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the City of Portland, I am writing to express our strong support of House Bill 3209.

The number of derelict and abandoned recreational vehicles in our public rights-of-way has skyrocketed in recent years. In 2024 alone, the Portland Bureau of Transportation removed an average of 51 derelict RVs from the public right of way per month. The vast majority of these vehicles are contaminated and damaged beyond recovery, requiring costly disposal at approximately \$100 per linear foot over and above towing expenses. These vehicles must also be stored for a minimum of 30 days prior to disposal, further compounding costs. Legal owners are difficult to trace or have long disclaimed ownership, making it difficult to hold individuals responsible for towing, storage, disposal, and other remediation costs.

Each week, city staff field reports of approximately 800 vehicles associated with homeless campsites. Many of these vehicles are lived-in RVs and cars. Some function but many do not. While we remain committed to delivering a compassionate solutions-oriented approach to working with individuals experiencing homelessness, we often hear from community members with serious safety and sanitation concerns associated with these vehicles. We also recognize that abandoned RVs pose serious environmental risks as they contain many hazardous materials that can leak into the soil and stormwater system or conflagrate, causing further safety issues. Portland has no public blackwater disposal, meaning every actively occupied RV is a risk to our community health and watershed.

Abandoned and derelict RVs represent a unique danger to our police, paramedic, and fire first responders in addition to the hazards they pose to their occupants and the surrounding community. They are often used to conceal drug and human traffic and pose mold, ventilation, contamination, and fire dangers. Registration fees do not currently account for these costs, or the high numbers of RVs that are ultimately dumped on Portland city streets and environmentally sensitive areas.

For all these reasons and more, I am looking for additional resources to allocate toward the removal of abandoned RVs when I propose my first budget in May. Despite the significant financial challenges ahead for the city, I know that this is an issue that requires consistent, timely

interventions. The state legislature has an opportunity to help communities respond to this financial, safety, and environmental burden by passing HB 3209.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "W".

Keith Wilson
Mayor, City of Portland