

April 15, 2025

Representative Nancy Nathanson, Chair
House Revenue Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Comments on HB 2725

Representative Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2725, which proposes changes to the Strategic Investment Program (SIP).

As a critical driver of economic development in Eastern Oregon, the Port of Morrow has long benefited from the state's innovative tools to attract investment, create jobs, and support regional growth. Utilizing economic development tools provided by the state, like enterprise zones, have been central to that success. The Port has been a partner with Morrow County Commission in the Columbia River Enterprise Zone since its inception.

In 2023, the legislature passed HB 2009, an economic development reform bill that added ports as eligible parties to participate in SIP agreements. This was a meaningful, *intentional* change in statute that recognized the role public ports play in attracting economic development opportunities to communities across our state.

We understand the City of Hillsboro is bringing this bill forward to address a unique situation created when ports were added as eligible parties. The Port of Portland is Oregon's only multi-county port district, with jurisdiction extending into Washington County, including areas where Hillsboro is actively pursuing economic development—but where the Port has no direct role in those projects.

While the Port of Morrow is opposed to the base bill, we are supportive of the -2 amendment, which was carefully negotiated by members of the Oregon Public Ports Association to address the issue above. The -2 strikes a balance by preserving access to the SIP for ports while addressing the needs faced by Hillsboro. The amendment would allow ports east of Bonneville Dam to utilize SIP district-wide, while ports west of Bonneville Dam would be eligible to participate in SIP agreements only for projects located on port-owned property. This regional approach ensures that the SIP remains a viable and flexible tool statewide.

In Morrow County, SIP and enterprise zones have helped transform our region's economic landscape and the Port of Morrow is grateful to now be included among the entities eligible to participate in SIP agreements. We believe ports across Oregon should continue to have access to these tools—now and in the future and ask that this committee not change course on the commitments made in HB 2009 (2023).

If planning to advance HB 2725, we respectfully request adoption of the -2 amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Lisa Mittelsdorf". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lisa" being more prominent than the last name "Mittelsdorf".

Lisa Mittelsdorf
Executive Director, Port of Morrow