



MAYOR KEITH WILSON

April 18, 2025

Capital Construction Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, Hearing Room E
Salem, OR 97301

Co-Chairs Girod and Nosse and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the City of Portland, I wish to express our strong support of Senate Bill 5505, which allocates important state bonding capacity to multiple important projects and programs of importance to Portland and all of Oregon.

First, as Council President Pirtle Guiney said in her testimony this morning, the City of Portland is a proud partner of Portland State University, and we enthusiastically support their request for \$85 million in general obligation bonds to enhance their arts and cultural facilities to benefit students, residents and visitors alike.

Our cultural assets not only fill us with hope and wonder – they help to drive a vibrant economy. And in Portland, investments in our cultural assets are even more meaningful as we continue to work to revitalize our downtown. To that end, the City of Portland is supporting PSU's master planning efforts as they reimagine facilities that serve their academic mission, strengthen the arts and help make downtown Portland a destination for residents, neighbors and visitors alike. So far, the city has committed \$7.6 million to this effort, and we are in ongoing conversations regarding various development opportunities on campus.

Portland's last City Council also directed city staff to begin important work to support the long-term need for a safe and accessible performing arts center in the central city. This work is underway, and it will help to inform future decisions around how we build and maintain world-class cultural venues in Portland that will serve all Oregonians.

The City remains committed to our partnership with PSU and doing the hard work to advance the incredible, catalytic projects that are coming to life in the heart of our city. These are not just investments in buildings – they are investments in community, education, creativity, and economic resilience.

Investments in the important catalytic projects like PSU's performing arts facility is one part of the recipe for success as we work to revitalize our central city. SB 5505 also includes other vital resources that are critical to our ongoing work to make Oregon an equitable and affordable place to live.

I am thrilled to see that SB 5505 includes over \$800 million statewide to support the Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Rental and Homeownership Programs within Oregon Housing and Community

Services, as well as \$500 million in Private Activity Bonds. The Legislature's ongoing and increased commitment to these programs demonstrates how deeply you care about addressing the housing crisis in Oregon. We need this ongoing partnership to keep building more rental and homeownership opportunities, particularly for low-income Oregonians.

While these big numbers can feel abstract and meaningless at times, we get to see them at work in our community, changing lives. In Portland, previously allocated LIFT resources have gone to support projects like The Aurora, a 93-unit affordable housing development located in the Glenfair neighborhood of outer East Portland. The project offers a mix of one, two, and three-bedroom homes, including 16 Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units designed for families with children transitioning out of homelessness. Our Just Future and LifeWorks Northwest provide comprehensive case management and access to mental health, addiction recovery, legal services, life skills training, and employment resources.

The Aurora highlights how LIFT resources and local funds are being effectively leveraged to create new affordable housing opportunities. The City of Portland remains optimistic and encouraged by the many other projects currently in the planning stages that will also benefit from local and state-level investment.

Thank you for considering these important resources that will help to shape a more vibrant and thriving Oregon for generations. I strongly and proudly encourage a yes vote on SB 5505.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Wilson", written in a cursive style.

Keith Wilson
Mayor, City of Portland