

METRO COUNCIL'S FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE VALUES + PRINCIPLES FOR THE 119th CONGRESS

The Metro Council's federal legislative agenda is comprised of two documents. The first document is a list of Metro's overarching federal legislative values and principles (below). The legislative values are broad, overarching positions that guide Metro's engagement on any federal issue, regardless of the topic area. The legislative principles are advocacy positions for specific topic. The second document comprising the federal legislative agenda is a narrow set of strategic legislative priorities (below) with the most opportunity to advance at the time of Council's adoption. The federal affairs program will focus advocacy efforts on the legislative priorities during the two-year Congress.

OVERARCHING LEGISLATIVE VALUES

SECURE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR OUR REGION

To ensure a prosperous economy, a clean and healthy environment, and a high quality of life for all of our residents, Metro and our partners must have sustainable financial resources to provide quality public services and advance regional priorities. This includes protecting Metro's existing sources of federal formula funding, soliciting additional discretionary funding, and supporting partners in applying for federal funding for projects of regional significance.

MAINTAIN ADEQUATE AGENCY STAFFING + FUNDING LEVELS

Many of Metro's plans, programs and projects are built on multi-decade partnerships with federal agencies. Metro believes that all federal agencies must maintain adequate staffing and funding levels so they can complete their statutorily defined responsibilities and continue advancing regional priority projects. This is especially true for federal agencies whose permitting processes, financing mechanisms, and programs intersect with Metro's policies and goals.

FACILITATE REGIONAL COORDINATION, PLANNING + GOVERNANCE

Many of our region's challenges are big and complex. While cities and counties play a key role in enacting policy change and improving the lives of their constituents, many of the region's persistent challenges require coordination among local jurisdictions, Tribes, community partners, and other entities. Metro supports equitable, comprehensive, and coordinated regional planning that encourages connections and alignment among cities and counties, while maintaining flexibility for local solutions.

SUPPORT GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT TRIBAL RELATIONS

Tribes are independent sovereigns with inherent powers of self-government and relationships with the U.S. government that derive from treaties, federal law and

executive orders. Metro supports policies, laws and legislative efforts that strengthen requirements for government-to-government tribal consultation; promote substantive involvement of Tribes and Indigenous People in federal decision-making processes; and that protect sensitive archeological, cultural, historic and natural resources which are critical to Tribes. Metro will work to support shared priorities advanced by Tribes, tribal organizations and Indigenous legislators, including those that address legacy impacts of non-Indian settlement and colonization across the U.S. Further, Metro encourages federal agencies to honor and uphold their trust and treaty obligations to Tribes.

DEFEND RACIAL EQUITY, LGBTQ RIGHTS, + IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

Metro envisions a region and state where a person's race, place of birth, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or immigration status does not predict their economic and social opportunities; access to services, housing, and healthcare; or quality of life. Metro supports policies that address past discrimination and persecution, eliminate disparities and barriers, and promote inclusion and accessibility in public programs, services, and facilities. Metro supports efforts to address the needs of, and enshrine civil rights protections for, Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC); Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two Spirit, Intersex, and Asexual; and immigrant communities.

TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE + RESTORE CLIMATE STABILITY

Metro supports policies and programs that help communities combat and adapt to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and reliance on fossil fuels at the local, regional, state, national, and international levels. This includes making infrastructure resilient to climate and extreme weather (e.g., seismic safe bridges), reducing and mitigating environmental impacts, especially from the transportation sector (e.g., fish passage, habitat connectivity), and reducing vulnerability to natural hazards, especially floods, earthquakes, and catastrophic wildfire.

TOPIC-SPECIFIC LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING + HOMELESSNESS

- *Increase Affordable Housing Production and Preservation*: Metro supports policies and investments that increase affordable housing production and development, preserves and maintains existing affordable housing, and provides pathways to homeownership. This includes affordable housing development financing mechanisms like Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grants, Community Development Financial Institutions, HOME Investment Partnerships Program.
- *Promote Equitable Access to Housing*: Metro supports bold, innovating policies and investments to ensure the most marginalized people have access to safe, stable, affordable housing, including policies that prevent discrimination,

eliminate barriers and disparities, tackle predatory actions in the housing sector, affirmatively furthers fair housing policies.

- *Increase Federal Resources for Wrap Around Services:* Metro supports resources and policies that embed high-quality wrap around services (e.g., behavioral and mental healthcare, nutrition services, case support) into supportive housing as a means of increasing access to direct service providers; addressing health-related social needs; and promote housing stability among some of the hardest-to-house and most vulnerable populations.
- *Expand Rental Subsidies:* Metro supports expanding rental subsidies (e.g., rental assistance, voucher programs, and other eviction prevention measures) that make housing more affordable and opposes efforts to establish eligibility restrictions that prevent equitable access to safe, stable, affordable housing (e.g., sobriety, documentation status requirements).
- *Improve Alignment Between Federal Agencies and Housing Services:* Metro supports an all-of-government approach that increases alignment and coordination across federal, state, regional, and local housing and homelessness systems to effectively implement lasting, interagency solutions (e.g., Oregon's Medicaid 1115 Demonstration Waiver), while recognizing that any federal housing policy must maintain flexibility for local innovation and streamlined deployment of funds.
- *Promote Housing First Policies:* Metro supports enacting housing policies that prioritize providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness without prerequisites for enrolling in other services (e.g., job searching, sobriety requirements).

TRANSPORTATION

- *Establish Sustainable Transportation Funding Mechanisms:* Metro supports establishing innovative, long-term, stable transportation funding mechanisms to support capital construction, operations, and maintenance and provide long-term solvency of the Highway Trust Fund (e.g., electric vehicles paying into the Highway Trust Fund, a national VMT pilot).
- *Expand Transportation Equity:* Metro supports funding and policies that support everyone's ability to move around the region safely, affordably, and easily by eliminating transportation-related disparities that are often experienced by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color as well as people with low incomes, limited English proficiency, and mobility challenges.
- *Improve Transportation Safety:* Metro supports the Safe Systems Approach and policies that reduce fatal and severe-injury crashes and increase the safety and security of the transportation system, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists, in marginalized communities, and along high-injury corridors.
- *Invest in Coordinated Multimodal Transportation Infrastructure:* Metro supports investments and policies that support the construction, operations,

and maintenance of connected and coordinated system of multimodal infrastructure, including public transportation (e.g., bus rapid transit and light rail) and bike / pedestrian infrastructure (e.g., bike lanes, shared-use paths and trails) that support everyone's ability to move around the region safely, affordably, and easily.

WASTE PREVENTION

- *Modernize the Waste System:* Metro supports modernizing the recycling system to be more convenient, accessible, safe, and equitable through expanded recycling and solid waste facilities such as drop off sites and recycling depots, especially for food waste, yard debris, household hazardous waste, bulky items, and hard-to-recycle items.
- *Promote Equitable and Socially Responsible End Markets:* Metro supports creating a standard definition and accountability measures for "responsible end markets" that recycle, recover, or dispose of materials in ways that minimize environmental, public health, and worker safety risks.
- *Preserve Flexibility for Local Waste Prevention Measures:* Metro supports aligning federal policy with best practices in waste prevention, recycling, and composting, but any efforts to create standard guidance, whether administrative or legislative, must support the role of states and localities to innovate and go beyond what is federally required.
- *Incentivize Public-Private Partnerships:* Metro supports efforts to promote public-private partnerships to expand local markets for priority recyclable materials, promote circularity, and conduct research and development of innovative technologies.
- *Prevent Waste and Promote Recycling, Reuse, Repair, and Composting:* Metro supports policies and programs that prevent and reduce the waste stream and promotes opportunities for composting, recycling, reuse, and repair, either via infrastructure, education, or other strategies.

HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

- *Protect and Restore Natural Areas and Degraded Ecosystems:* Metro supports policies and funding for local conservation efforts, including purchasing and restoring natural areas, wetlands, vulnerable ecosystems, and significant landscapes.
- *Conserve and Recover At-Risk Species:* Metro supports policies and funding for local, national, and international species conservation and recovery efforts, especially for threatened, endangered, and at-risk species.
- *Remediate Environmental Contamination at Brownfields and Superfund Sites:* Metro supports policies and funding for environmental contamination assessments and remediation efforts, particularly in areas where pollution disproportionately impacts communities of color and Tribes.

- *Defend Foundational Environmental Laws and Regulations:* Metro opposes efforts to weaken federal environmental laws, regulations, or permitting requirements, including the National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act.

TRIBAL RELATIONS

- *Investigate and Address Impacts and Effects of Indian Boarding School Policies:* Metro supports efforts to establish a federal Commission modeled after Canada's Truth and Healing Commission to investigate the impacts and ongoing effects of Indian Board School Policies and identify recommendations on how to address those impacts.
- *Strengthen Compliance and Enforcement of Cultural Resource Protections:* Metro supports efforts to reduce impacts to tribal resources, traditional cultural properties, formal cultural resource sites, and sacred sites. This includes strengthening compliance and resources to administer the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act. Metro opposes efforts to weaken federal laws, regulations, or permitting requirements, including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Archeological Resources Protection Act, American Indian Religious Freedom Act, and Indian Sacred Sites Act.
- *Reduce Violence Against Indigenous People:* Metro supports efforts to improve public safety within tribal lands and Indian reservations, strengthen tribal law enforcement, improve coordination between federal agencies working for and within Indian Country, create mandatory missing persons data and reporting standards, address jurisdictional issues so crimes can be prosecuted when they occur, provide resources to urban Native communities, and provide culturally appropriate services to victims so that impacted Tribes and families have greater access to justice.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

- *Enhance Metro's Public Arts, Education, Cultural and Tourism Venues:* Metro supports policies and investments that support capital upgrades, maintenance, operations, ticketing fairness and transparency, and programming at the Oregon Convention Center, Expo Center, Portland's 5 Centers for the Arts, and Oregon Zoo.
- *Expand Career Pathway and Workforce Development Programs:* Metro supports investments in career pathways, workforce development, and economic mobility programs, especially among BIPOC communities.
- *Defend Collective Bargaining Rights:* Metro supports policies that support the right for employees to organize into unions and collectively bargain to establish fair terms and conditions of employment, including wages, benefits, working hours, and other workplace rules.