

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFERRING TO METRO) RESOLUTION NO. 20-5083
AREA VOTERS A BALLOT MEASURE)
AUTHORIZING AN INCOME TAX ON METRO)
AREA HIGH EARNER RESIDENTS TO PROVIDE) Introduced by the Metro
FUNDING FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SERVICES) Council

WHEREAS, the greater Portland region is facing a severe housing affordability and homelessness crisis, which endangers the health and safety of thousands of our unhoused neighbors. Homelessness is a deeply traumatic and dehumanizing experience that no person should have to endure, regardless of their circumstances; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 3,123 to 4,935 households in the greater Portland region need supportive housing services, and thousands more need housing assistance, according to the February 2020 ECONorthwest report entitled “Potential Sources and Uses of Revenue to Address the Region’s Homeless Crisis”;

WHEREAS, communities of color have been directly impacted by a long list of systemic inequities and discriminatory policies that have caused higher rates of housing instability and homelessness among people of color and they are disproportionately represented in the housing affordability and homelessness crisis;

WHEREAS, in June 2016, the Metro Council adopted its Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, which, guided by input from many regional partners and informed by research, identified racial equity as the approach to ensure that all people who live, work and recreate in the greater Portland region have the opportunity to share in and help define a thriving, livable and prosperous place; and

WHEREAS, the housing affordability and homelessness crisis in the greater Portland region impacts us all and requires collective and individual action from every person, business, elected official, and resident that calls the region home;

WHEREAS, a safe, affordable home is the cornerstone on which all other success is built, and the stable foundation all members of our community need to thrive;

WHEREAS, the homelessness crisis is an issue of scale and services do not yet match the scope of the crisis;

WHEREAS, between 2016 and 2018 voters in the region overwhelmingly approved two affordable housing bonds worth nearly \$1 billion, indicating that residents in the region understand the gravity of this crisis and the urgent need to address the crisis;

WHEREAS, the region can maximize its historic, billion-dollar investment in affordable housing construction and development by securing highly flexible funding to invest in proven, outcome-driven, client-centered solutions like case management, job training, addiction and recovery services, mental health support, rent assistance (both long- and short-term), homelessness prevention services, housing placement, and other tools people need to be successful; and

WHEREAS, to ensure the program's success, Metro will create an oversight body that is empowered to track all revenue, evaluate program implementation, and take appropriate action to ensure outcomes match intentions,

WHEREAS, an oversight body will establish a robust oversight structure that is representative of diverse stakeholders, ensures that new revenue raised to fund these critical programs efficiently makes it to frontline service providers, is appropriately leveraged with existing service dollars, and is not used to replace existing funding;

WHEREAS, success will be based on critically recognized metrics measure the results of the services provided and evidence that the communities disproportionately impacted are benefiting from the Supportive Housing Services funds; and

WHEREAS, measuring outcomes through such metrics, and providing public transparency and accountability is vital to maintain the long-term support of voters and the community; and

WHEREAS, performance and financial audits of the funds will be necessary to ensure appropriate accountability and transparency; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Council recognizes that although homelessness knows no jurisdictional boundary, local communities are best positioned to provide tailored services to meet local community needs;

WHEREAS, it is the intent of this measure to provide resources above and beyond those provided by the federal government, the Oregon Legislature, or local government, and therefore the revenue from this measure should not be counted against or used to supplant any federal, state or local monies; and

WHEREAS, a broad coalition of service providers, business leaders, elected officials, and advocates have come together as HereTogether over the course of the last year to identify the needs, develop strategies, engage communities, and build regional consensus; and

WHEREAS, on February 13, 2020, the Metro Council held a public hearing, at which the chairs of Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington county commissions, the HereTogether Coalition, and residents of the entire region gave testimony to the homeless crisis, requesting that Metro refer a ballot measure to address this region-wide crisis;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council finds that homeless and housing services is a matter of metropolitan concern; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Metro Council submits to the qualified voters of the Metro Area the ballot measure attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A, authorizing a personal income tax for the purpose of funding homeless and housing services (the “Supportive Housing Services Ballot Measure”); and
2. The Metro Council certifies the Ballot Title attached to this Resolution as Exhibit B for placing the Supportive Housing Services Ballot Measure on the ballot for the May 19, 2020 Primary Election for legal voters to adopt or reject; and
3. The Metro Council authorizes and directs the Metro Chief Operating Officer, the Metro Chief Financial Officer and the Metro Attorney, or their respective designees (each, an “Authorized Representative”), each acting individually, to file with the county elections official the Ballot Title and a related explanatory statement prepared by the Authorized Representative pursuant to Metro Code Section 9.02.020; and
4. The Metro Council authorizes and directs the Authorized Representative to take all other actions necessary to place the Supportive Housing Services Ballot Measure on the ballot for the May 19, 2020 Primary Election in a manner consistent with and in furtherance of this Resolution; and
5. Upon passage of the Ballot Measure the Metro Attorney will assign the Ballot Measure sections in Exhibit A with title, chapter and section numbers for the Metro Code as the Metro Attorney deems appropriate based on current Metro Code titles, chapters and sections; and
6. Upon passage of the Supportive Housing Services Ballot Measure the Metro Council will take further action to establish rules to enforce and implement the tax imposed by the measure. This may include rules regarding penalties, interest, filing dates, required forms and documentation, residency determinations for income tax payment purposes, refunds and deficiencies, audit authority, overpayments, estimated payments, exemptions, appeals from income determinations, legal collection actions and any other provision deemed necessary to effectively and efficiently administer the tax and achieve its purposes; and
7. Homeless and housing services is a matter of metropolitan concern.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this ____ day of February 2020.

Lynn Peterson, Council President

Approved as to Form:

Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney