



December 3, 2020

Dear, Metro Council:

Westside Economic Alliance (WEA) recognizes homelessness is an important issue across the region. Voters passed the affordable housing bond in 2018 and the supportive housing services measure this May to provide wraparound services for this vulnerable population. Now WEA is requesting attention to the recent measure's funding mechanism, specifically in terms of feasibility, taxpayer education, and understanding.

WEA is requesting Metro create a plan to educate businesses, tax preparers, and individuals. **This tax will be taking effect soon, and most taxpayers do not know it exists** – thus, they will be unprepared to pay the tax, creating significant challenges and uncertainties for these programs as well as businesses trying to comply with the new law. Our organization is suggesting Metro host a series of workshops and create an educational campaign as soon as possible to help in its public outreach efforts to taxpayers.

WEA would like to see this implementation process be simplified in terms of interest and penalties. Our organization would suggest Metro align with the State of Oregon when it comes to the interest rate charged. Given the lack of information/education currently available to businesses, individuals, or tax preparers, WEA also asks for penalty relief going into 2022.

When it comes to the actual income tax, WEA requests Metro to align with Oregon income tax law for statutory compliance. Our organization believes this will avoid costly litigation, ultimately ease administrative burdens, and allow Metro to collect revenue for services. It will also make compliance easier on taxpayers across the region, since they are already familiar with the state's income tax.

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Overall, WEA wants to see this tax measure implemented with viability and simplicity in mind and to educate the region's taxpayers as soon as possible, so our homeless population can receive the services needed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Westside Economic Alliance is a business advocacy group, representing members from both the private and public sectors in Washington County and Clackamas County. Together we work to improve the local business climate and the economic health of our region.

Sincerely,

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

Pamela Treece
Executive Director