

## Citizens' Review Statement of Measure 26-199, Portland Metro Region Affordable Housing Bond (2018)

This Citizens' Statement was developed by an independent panel of 20 Portland metro-area voters. The panelists were randomly selected from registered voters in the Portland Metro district and anonymously balanced to reflect its electorate, based on these factors: location of residence, party registration, age, gender, education, race/ethnicity, and renter/homeowner status. Over a period of four days, the panel heard from measure proponents and opponents, as well as independent policy experts. The citizen panelists deliberated about the measure and produced this statement.

For more information or to view an electronic version of this statement, visit [healthydemocracy.org/cir/or](http://healthydemocracy.org/cir/or).

### Key Findings

These findings were ranked by citizen panelists, starting with the most important for voters to know.

- Half of proposed affordable housing units will be for very low income families - those making less than 30% of area median family income, or \$24,420 for a family of four.
- This bond will cost an estimated 24 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The average homeowner will pay \$5 per month, or \$60 annually for a home assessed at \$240,000.
- The bond funds will be disbursed approximately as follows: 45% to Multnomah County, 35% to Washington County and 20% to Clackamas County, for affordable housing, minus 5% for administrative costs.
- Of the \$652.8 million in property tax increases, up to 5% (\$32.6 million) goes to administrative costs, an additional 13-20% (\$84 million to \$130 million) are usually paid to local government fees/charges.
- Metro states there is a current need for more than 48,000 affordable units and that this bond would create at least 2,400 units.
- If statewide Measure 102 passes along with this bond, local government, private sectors and non-profits could partner and access additional funding sources to provide a greater amount of affordable housing.
- Local and regional administrative costs are capped at 5%. Community oversight and independent financial audits are required. Affordable housing will be distributed according to percentages contributed by each county.
- Since 2011, average Portland rents have risen by more than 40%.

### Statement in Support

We find these to be the strongest reasons to vote for the measure.

- *Finding:* This bond is intended to build or renovate affordable homes for a projected 7,500 people in the region, or up to 12,000 people if statewide Measure 102 passes as well.  
*This Is Important Because:* There is an affordable housing shortage. Affordable housing increases the quality of life and improves neighborhoods for cost-burdened individuals.
- *Finding:* A full-time worker may not be able to afford market rent. The average Portland area renter earns \$17.84 per hour. \$25.58 is required for an average two bedroom apartment.  
*This Is Important Because:* Over 50% of Portland-area renters pay more than 30% of their income for housing. Full-time workers deserve access to affordable housing.
- *Finding:* A spokesperson for this measure states that Metro, in cooperation with other partners, has experience creating housing and transit development within the Metro area. Metro has a AAA bond rating.  
*This Is Important Because:* Metro has a high bond rating with a successful history and a proven track record working with local agencies developing affordable housing.

*Position Summary:* Due to the high cost of the housing market, an unreasonable burden is put on the people who can least afford it. If we don't act, who will? Passing this bond will help our fellow neighbors and create healthier communities.

### Statement in Opposition

We find these to be the strongest reasons to vote against the measure.

- *Finding:* Assessed property value usually increases 3% annually. As assessed value goes up, taxes will increase for the life of the bond, making property ownership less affordable, possibly raising monthly rents.  
*This Is Important Because:* This increased tax burdens property owners and could cause landlords to further increase rents. This tax increase could affect all of us.
- *Finding:* The community oversight committee and financial audit process do not have specific guidelines written into the measure.  
*This Is Important Because:* Who will serve on these committees? We need guidelines to provide accountability, to ensure tax dollars are spent wisely, and to avoid conflicts of interest.
- *Finding:* With no spending cap per unit, Metro could spend \$500 per square foot to create housing in downtown Portland, or \$200 per square foot to build in cheaper locations.  
*This Is Important Because:* Without spending caps or accountability, there is no guarantee they will make the most efficient use of tax dollars to build affordable housing.

*Position Summary:* This measure creates very few affordable units while increasing the burden to property owners. This directly affects the affordability of property ownership and could increase rent and other costs for those already struggling. Millions of dollars will be spent on administrative costs and additional local government fees.

This statement has not been edited, altered, or approved by the project team, Healthy Democracy, or any other body. The opinions expressed in this statement are those of the members of a citizen panel and were developed through the citizens' review process. They are NOT official opinions or positions endorsed by the Metro regional government or any government agency. A citizen panel is not a judge of the constitutionality or legality of any ballot measure; any statements about such matters are not binding in a court of law.