

## Written Testimony - Agenda Item 799

Agenda Item	Name	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
779	Robert Stoll	Support	it is critical that everything possible be done to encourage activity downtown, which is the economic center for our region.	No	09/13/23 8:01 AM
779	Anonymous	Oppose	Why should Downtown businesses get a tax refund while businesses city wide suffer with the same crime and drug problems. This isn't just a downtown or central East side issue it's city wide. Giving taxes back isn't going to keep businesses around. What they want is police taking action and camps swept.	No	09/13/23 12:41 PM
779	Service Employees International Union, Local 49	Support	The attached testimony in support of the Downtown Business Incentive Credit is submitted on behalf of SEIU Local 49 Political Director Yasmin Ibarra.	Yes	09/14/23 11:46 AM
779	Jennifer Polver Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc.	Support		Yes	09/14/23 12:08 PM



Testimony to the Portland City Council  
Provided by Yasmin Ibarra  
Political Director  
SEIU Local 49

Re: Support for the Downtown Business Incentive Credit

September 14, 2023

Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners,

My name is Yasmin Ibarra and I am the Political Director of the Service Employees International Union, Local 49. SEIU Local 49 is a union of nearly 14,000 essential healthcare and property service workers, including the City's subcontracted janitors, security officers, and laundry workers, as well as thousands of janitors and security officers who clean and secure commercial office buildings downtown.

Our members worked tirelessly and in-person throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent periods of civil unrest and instability to ensure Portland's largely vacant office buildings were properly maintained and secured. They have firsthand experience of the current state of our downtown core and are eager to partner with the City on solutions to help revitalize downtown and restore our downtown community to its previous vibrancy. Accordingly, SEIU Local 49 is in support of the proposed Downtown Business Incentive Credit as one tool in this effort.

Our support for this tax credit, however, is tempered by our hope that the City will prioritize a downtown recovery plan that works for *all* members of our community regardless of position on the economic ladder. As the City works on developing a multi-faceted plan for our downtown recovery, our members will be looking for ways to partner with the City and stakeholders to ensure that future tax incentives include a commitment to good jobs and community benefits.

Thank you.

Yasmin Ibarra  
Political Director  
Service Employees International Union, Local 49

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September 14, 2023

To: Mayor Ted Wheeler  
Commissioner Rene Gonzalez  
Commissioner Mingus Mapps  
Commissioner Carmen Rubio  
Commissioner Dan Ryan

RE: Business License Fee Exemption

I am writing this letter on behalf of Pioneer Courthouse Square, a public/private management organization, in support of the City of Portland's Business License Fee Exemption Proposal.

Pioneer Courthouse Square resides in the center of Portland's central business district. We create public programming initiatives for downtown and support the operations of 8 businesses on The Square as well as countless businesses that surround it.

As you are aware, the current climate downtown makes it challenging for many business owners - large and small - to be successful. Incentives, such as the Business License Fee Exemption, are needed to attract more businesses into the central business district.

It's essential for the City of Portland and its private partners to work together to create an environment that attracts people to the core of downtown.

Thank you for your service to the city.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jennifer L. Polver', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jennifer L. Polver  
Executive Director

Public Testimony

September 14, 2023

To: Mayor Ted Wheeler

Commissioner Carmen Rubio

Commissioner Mingus Mapps

Commissioner Dan Ryan

Commissioner Rene Gonzalez

RE: Business License Fee Exemption

I am Susan Keil, Chair of Portland Mall Management, Inc., known as PMMI. PMMI is a public/private management organization focused on providing stewardship for the 52 blocks of downtown Portland's transit mall along SW 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues, as well as the 24 central blocks in downtown, bordered by SW Yamhill and Morrison streets.

Related to the measure you are considering today, the PMMI area includes small and large businesses such as retail, professional offices, hotels and restaurants. Many of the buildings, which house these businesses, are significantly underutilized with a great deal of vacant space.

We believe that a healthy downtown is safe, clean and active. That has not been the case for nearly 3 years. Downtown is coming out of a pretty deep hole. This proposal for a business license tax exemption for a year, is good, but needs to be in place for 2 years, at a minimum. Landlords are struggling to get tenants to commit for multiple years, given the condition of downtown. As much certainty and financial help as possible is critical.

The importance of bringing people back to offices, retail, restaurants, hotels and events cannot be overstated. The core needs to be active, clean and safe.

This proposal is a good incentive, but should be a 2-year commitment. The exemption is a visible way for Council to show its support for a healthy downtown amid the ongoing recovery.

Thank you,

Susan Keil, PMMI Chair



**Portland City Council Meeting - Thursday, September 14, 2023 2:00 p.m.**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
779-1	Peter	Andrews
779-2	Ann	Kasper
779-3	Susan	Griffin
779-4	Travis	Parrott
779-5	Susan	Keil
779-6	Marc	Wilkins
779-7	Andrew	Hoan
779-8	Charlie	Floberg
779-9	Matt	Goodman
779-10	Erik	Cole