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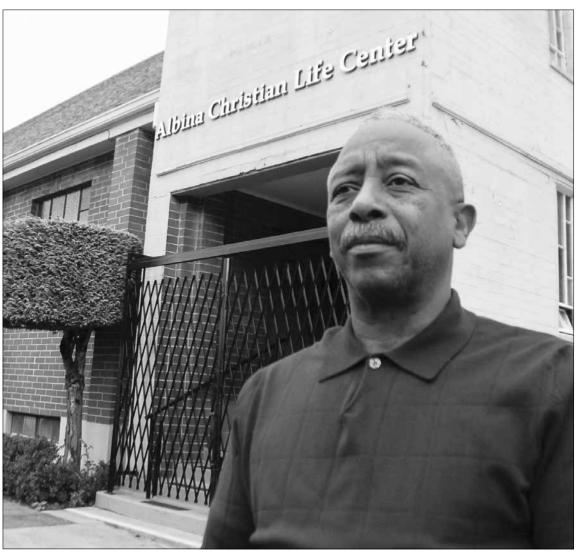




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OCAL NEWS



PORTLAND OBSERVER ARCHIVE PHOTO

Bishop Marcus Irving of the Albina Christian Life Center on North Willamette Boulevard is pictured in this Portland Observer photo from last fall. Irving is one of the church leaders who have spoken out against new regulations on posting earthquake warnings and opposing new rules for upgrades over concerns they would lead to the displacement of churches like his and other businesses and nonprofit organizations in communities of color.

Reprieve on Earthquake Rules

City exchanges requirements for voluntary effort

The Portland City Council has voted to remove mandatory requirements to post warning signs on unreinforced masonry buildings and require future upgrades to meet new earthquake safety standards. The decision is a win for some African American community church leaders and

others who said the unintended forced masonry building owners consequences of such a measure would lead to more displacement of homes, business and nonprofit organizations.

Instead, city commissioners in the decision made Wednesday will allow the city to form a committee to develop a voluntary seismic retrofit program for buildings prone to partially or complete collapse during a major earthquake. The new effort will also focus on policy and financial options to help for-profit and non-profit unreinreduce the seismic dangers posed by their structures.

It follows the temporary suspension of the requirements from Portland City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, who was elected as the first black female member of the council last year. A lawsuit against the city by business owners also sought to remove the new

"As a long-time organizer and

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Nov. 5 Election Ballots Due

positions in the Portland School District is before fire protection. voters this week with the ballots due by Tuesday, Nov. 5 at county election offices

or at official designated ballot drop-off locations.

Portland will also see a measure to increase protections for the Bull Run Watershed, the city's source of drinking water, and ask for approval of emergency mutual aid agreements with other municipalities. Troutdale voters will decide on reconstruction bonds for its old city hall,

A measure to renew critical funding for teaching and Sauvie Island residents will vote on a levy for

A Metro regional government ballot covering Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties will ask residents to replace an expiring levy with a new one to pay for parks and natural areas, and provide new protections for water quality and wildlife.

Ballots are generally mailed, but a postmark does not count for meeting the deadline. Ballots must be physically received

at any county elections office by 8 p.m. on Nov. 5.