



Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians Tribal Council

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Of

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF SILETZ INDIANS

Oregon House Bill 2055

February 4, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on Oregon House Bill 2055 (HB 2055), a bill to establish a Workforce Housing Accelerator program within the Housing and Community Services Department.

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (CTSI) is the largest employer in Lincoln County – the Chinook Winds Casino and Resort located in Lincoln City employs approximately 750 people and the CTSI government employs an additional 250 people. Most but not all employees reside in Lincoln County.

In Lincoln County, the demand for housing far exceeds supply, creating inflated housing costs. The high cost to purchase or rent housing is unsustainable for the majority of working class families. For the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, lack of affordable housing is a factor in high employee turnover, resulting in instability in the workplace.

HB 2055 authorizes an appropriation of \$15,000,000 from the General Fund to implement the initiatives in HB 2055. Provisions in HB 2055, particularly direct funding for new construction, provide a good start to begin to address the shortage of affordable housing within the state.

Oregon's Housing and Community Services Department (OHCSA) issued a Request for Funding Announcement (RFA#914-4617-17) in December of 2017, a Workforce Housing Initiative (WHI), similar to HB 2055. The CTSI submitted an application for funding and would like to include comments for the record as a result of that experience.

Oregon Tribes are successful and an important part of the economy. When we analyzed the rating and ranking system for the previous WHI, we noted an inequity in the scoring criterion with weighting toward urban area development. Because tribal communities tend to be rural, allocating points to spur housing development in urban areas puts Tribes at a disadvantage when applying for state funds. To create parity, we respectfully suggest adding a point value in the scoring criteria for tribes or development on tribal lands.

For sustainable economic growth within tribal communities, it is imperative that tribes are able to access all resources that are available through the state government. Many housing funding

resources, including Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, are distributed through scoring systems developed at the state level. Reviewers do not necessarily have familiarity with Tribes or development on Tribal lands. To facilitate the development of equitable scoring systems in all Oregon housing funding opportunities, it is important to have diverse representation. To that end, we recommend the inclusion of a tribal representative on the Housing Stability Council, appointed by the Governor.

The CTSI supports the spirit and intent of HB 2055 and agree that affordable housing for working families is crucial for stability, prosperity, and growth. We strongly encourage consideration of the above stated recommendations so tribal interests are represented in the development of processes and programs impacting our workforce.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Delores Pigsley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'D'.

Delores Pigsley, Tribal Chairman