

February 12, 2019

Senate Committee on Human Services
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street
Salem, Oregon

Chair Gelser, Vice-Chair Heard, Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Neighborhood Partnerships, a statewide non-profit organization, to express our strong support for Senate Bill 491 and to urge your yes vote.

Senate Bill 491 relates to the Fairview Housing Trust. For decades, people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities lived at the Fairview Training Center, an institution and hospital. The Fairview Training Center was finally closed in the 2000's, and when the State sold the land, the money from the sale was put into a trust to ensure housing opportunities for people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In 2015, the Legislature created the Fairview Trust Advisory Committee, to help provide oversight and input into how Trust funds were spent. Since 2015, the Fairview Trust Advisory Committee has been working to identify priorities, and opportunities. In 2017, the Committee identified an opportunity to partner with Oregon Housing and Community Services, our state housing finance agency, and combine funds with other resources to help build accessible and affordable homes for people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities. Unfortunately, a number of barriers arose during 2018 which meant that the Fairview Trust Advisory Committee was unable to successfully dedicate resources to add affordable housing units for people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities.

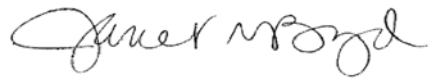
The Fairview Trust Advisory Committee is advocating for SB 491, before you today, which will avoid the barriers to use of the Trust resources. SB 491 removes the Fairview Trust from within State Government, and moves it to the Oregon Community Foundation. SB 491 does not change the purpose of the Trust. It maintains the purpose laid out in the original vision for the Trust, and will ensure continued oversight by the Advisory Committee.

We know that we have experienced non-profit housing providers across Oregon who can help to create housing stability and the opportunity that comes with having a safe, accessible, affordable place to call home. These organizations are experts in building and maintaining affordable housing in our communities, and with additional resources, they could help to meet the goals of the Trust and add accessibility modifications or other amenities to better serve people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition, there are a range of other housing needs that people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities are facing. The Fairview Trust could be used to create

housing stability in other ways: provide a deposit to help someone access an affordable and accessible home; provide additional assistance to help someone access affordable homeownership; provide resources to do needed repairs to a home; and many more.

SB 491 will help provide housing opportunity for people experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities. SB 491 maintains community oversight and the purpose of the Trust. We urge your aye vote on SB 491.

Thank you all for your service to our state, and for your action to build housing stability across Oregon.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Janet Byrd".

Janet Byrd
Executive Director, Neighborhood Partnerships