

Testimony on HB 5005 on the Oregon Housing and Community Services budget requests. April 12, 2019

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee.

I am writing to support HB 5005, and the Housing Alliance request for \$200 million in General Obligation, Article XI-Q bonds to build affordable homes across Oregon.

I'm Diane Linn, Executive Director of *Proud Ground* and on the Board of *Housing Oregon*. Proud Ground provides permanently affordable homeownership opportunities to working families in the Metro area and in Lincoln County. We work in partnership with Habitat for Humanity in Portland and with affiliates around the state.

At Proud Ground, we believe working families deserves the chance to own a home to stabilize their family, grow equity and thrive. Presently, there are approximately 350 families on our wait list for homeownership opportunities – most are people of color and have children.

Proud Ground received the largest LIFT funding award in the first round targeted at Preference Policy families (those returning to the N/NE area of Portland after years of crippling displacement). We are building a mixed-income condo project with 40 permanently affordable units for working PP family in the heart of N/NE Portland on light rail. In partnership with Habitat for Humanity Portland Metro East, we are breaking new ground that would not be possible with LIFT bond funds. It's a higher density model that should be duplicated to serve families around the state.

We plan to apply for more LIFT funds for projects in Newport and Portland with partner builders and Habitat affiliates. With the proposed budget request, Proud Ground, Habitat affiliates and the homeownership organizations have the capacity to build more homes. We serve families making as low as 30 and as high as 100 % AMI and have wait lists of ready buyers anxious to be free of the brutal rental market or camping out in a subsidized rental unit because they have no place else to go. Once a family owns their home, they thrive – kids do better in school, health indicators

and employment improves. Homeownership is a game changer for families and is desperately needed that stay affordable forever

Since 2015, the Legislature has committed \$120 million in general obligation bonds to the LIFT program with a 20% soft set aside for homeownership. These resources represent the largest investment in new housing development with the stabilization benefits of homeownership in Oregon history.

Oregon can build on the progress to provide critically needed safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Please support this bond program expansion. Thank you for your service and consideration of this important legislation.