

April 11, 2019

To: Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction

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

Submitted via email: jwmcc.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Dear Committee Members,

We believe everyone deserves a place to call home. This is the fundamental reason REACH Community Development exists and why we are writing in support of [HB 5005](#), and the Housing Alliance request for \$200 million in General Obligation, Article XI-Q bonds to build affordable homes across Oregon.

REACH is an Oregon non-profit that exists to create quality, affordable homes and opportunities for individuals, families and communities to thrive. We serve the Portland Metro region by building and preserving affordable apartment homes and through services and programs that give REACH residents the opportunity to succeed.

Oregon's communities will be more prosperous and successful if we are able to ensure that all people have access to quality, stable housing options. However, in the communities we serve, on average there are **only 20 affordable apartments for everyone 100 people who need it**. We have witnessed the significant delays in how fast we can build affordable apartments when there are not sufficient local resources. **The Oregon legislature has the opportunity to significantly increase housing production throughout the state through The Local Initiative Fast Track (LIFT), funded through HB 5005.**

LIFT resources have changed what's possible in Oregon when it comes to housing affordability. Over 18 month ago, REACH finished the design and permit approval for an innovative, cost efficient new affordable apartment building in East Portland (124th Ash). The cost-efficient design allows for more apartments with rents affordable to extremely low income households (30% of median

income and below). A third of the apartments will be affordable at this very low level, without needing to use additional project-based rental subsidies, which are in very short supply.

Despite our innovative, high impact design, the local funding sources were just not available. **So, for over 18 months, this shovel ready project, has been waiting as an empty parking lot.**

Fortunately, the LIFT program aligned closely with our innovative design and service partnership with Asian Health & Service Center. 124th Ash was selected for funding in the most recent round and will break ground shortly. Without LIFT funding, we would have faced a tough choice of continuing to spend scarce resources to hold the land longer; hoping to find funding or cutting our losses and selling the land. The LIFT program creates a situation where organization like REACH are more confident in pursuing more innovative designs; **accelerating the pace of affordable housing development across Oregon.**

If you believe like we do, that everyone should have a place to call home, put down roots in a community, and have the opportunity to thrive, then please vote YES on HB 5005. The \$200 million request for the LIFT program will leverage additional resources, drive innovation, and create inspiring places for Oregonians to call home for many decades to come.

Thank you for your service to Oregon and making the difficult tradeoffs needed to ensure housing stability is elevated as a top priority in our state. Because for a family facing a housing crisis, the next session is too late.

Sincerely,



Dan Valliere,
REACH Community Development, CEO



Rebecca Maese, RN, Nurse Emeritus
Board President
Providence Health and Services (retired)