



April 19, 2019

Dear Members of Capital Construction Subcommittee:

I am writing to voice my strong support for the Housing Alliance's request for \$100 million of Lottery Backed Bonds (LBB) to support affordable housing preservation.

Preservation needs are especially urgent among our state's public housing properties with at-risk federal rental subsidies. Housing authorities such as Home Forward currently have a rare, but time sensitive, opportunity to preserve Oregon's public housing portfolio for the long-term through a series of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs. These programs allow housing authorities to leverage private sector funding to address capital needs arising from decades of federal disinvestment.

Working in close collaboration with Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), Home Forward's 85 Stories initiative is currently utilizing LBB preservation funding and other OHCS resources to take full advantage of HUD's public housing preservation programs. This partnership with OHCS is catalyzing major renovations to 315 of our apartments, leveraging \$54 million of private funding in the process. It ensures that a key element of our affordable housing infrastructure will continue to serve the same extremely low-income populations while keeping millions of dollars of important federal rental subsidy flowing into Oregon annually.

Home Forward is one of four Oregon housing authorities currently using LBB funding to preserve its public housing stock. From Lane to Clackamas County and from Salem to Portland, over 9,000 elderly, disabled or extremely low-income residents currently live in our state's public housing. On average, these Oregonians are over 55 years old, live with a disabling condition or experience mental illness, and survive on less than \$15,000 a year. These homes are their safety net.

Public housing preservation alone will take tens of millions of dollars of state resources in upcoming years, yet public housing is not the only component of our affordable housing system needing preservation. Home Forward's 85 Stories initiative is part of a suite of efforts necessary to ensure the long-term viability our state's affordable housing infrastructure. Home Forward therefore supports the Housing Alliance proposal because it provides the funding necessary to continue to provide Oregonians with safety, security and opportunity through housing.

Sincerely,

Peter Beyer, Acting Executive Director  
Home Forward