

February 13, 2020

Joint Ways and Means Sub-committee on Capital Construction

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

My name is David Groff. I am Co-Chair of the Interfaith Alliance on Poverty, a group of fourteen congregations, Catholic, Jewish and Protestant. Most are located in Northeast Portland but four are on the westside. Our mission is to gain a better understanding of poverty in our city and state and take actions to address it from a faith perspective.

I am writing to support HB 5201, and the Speaker's request for \$50 million in General Obligation, Article XI-Q bonds to build affordable homes across Oregon (and/or) \$20 million for Lottery Bonds to maintain existing affordable homes.

All our member congregations are acutely aware of the houselessness crisis our city has been experiencing for some time. We all frequently encounter people seeking shelter on our property and we all participate in programs serving the houseless providing both volunteers and financial support. Our faith traditions tell us in no uncertain terms that no one should have to live without shelter. Everyone deserves a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. For these reasons some of our member congregations and other faith communities in the Portland metro area are seeking ways to create affordable housing on their properties. With additional resources from the state and some zoning code changes from the city these projects will be able to move forward.

The present crisis demands that our state mobilize every available resource to create the affordable housing that is sorely needed. Faith communities like those that make up our Interfaith Alliance on Poverty are willing to help in every way they can. We are grateful to you for your public service and for your attention to the challenges of creating enough affordable housing in our beloved state.

Sincerely,

David H. Groff
Co-chair
Interfaith Alliance on Poverty

