



INNOVATIVE HOUSING, INC.

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February 13, 2020

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction  
Attention: Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee.  
Via email: [jwmcc.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:jwmcc.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov)

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

I am writing on behalf of Innovative Housing, Inc. (IHI) to express our support for HB 5201, and the Speakers 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.

IHI is a nonprofit affordable housing developer and operator. We currently own and operate over 900 affordable rental units in Oregon, each of which is in incredibly high demand and houses families or individuals who are struggling to make ends meet. Most of our housing is located in the Portland Metro area, but we also have apartments in Albany and are working on multiple sites along the coast. Many of our homes are set aside for people with special needs or high barriers to housing, including histories of homelessness, disabilities, criminal records, and little or no income. The rest of our portfolio houses families who simply cannot afford market rate housing on the wages they earn.

IHI is currently using LIFT funds to create 40 new housing units in Astoria. This funding was critical to the project, as there are few other sources available in this community that so desperately needs affordable housing. We previously received LIFT funding for a family housing project in Northeast Portland that was otherwise stalled due to a funding gap. That project is complete and is currently in the midst of lease up with 25 families already moved in!

LIFT is a fantastic resource that makes new housing possible. We plan to apply for LIFT in 2020-21 to help create 220 new family units for very low-income families in Portland and up to 84 new family units in Lincoln County. LIFT is the only funding source available for these critical family projects. We have so much need in communities across Oregon – resources like LIFT make it possible for us to build more homes and move vulnerable people into safe, stable housing.

Since 2015, the Legislature has committed \$120 million in general obligation bonds to the LIFT program, creating over 2,000 affordable homes. These homes are being built throughout Oregon – Astoria to Klamath Falls, Newport to Ontario, Portland, Roseburg, Hermiston, Eugene, Bend, Redmond, and Sisters, and everywhere in between.

We believe everyone deserves a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Across Oregon, non-profits like Innovative Housing are ready to build safe, stable, and affordable homes for rent

and for purchase. With additional resources, we can do more of this work and build more housing for our state.

I urge you to support the Speaker's request for \$50 million to develop new affordable homes across Oregon (80% to affordable rental homes, 20% to affordable homes for sale). We are looking at future projects now, and hope we can rely on this critical GO bond funding to make them happen.

Thank you for your time, your commitment, and your service to Oregon and its most vulnerable residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sarah J. Stevenson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sarah J. Stevenson  
Executive Director