

Community Housing Fund
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Oregon State Legislature

House Committee on Housing

Representative Julie Fahey, Chair

RE: Support for HB 2095: Relating to Publicly Supporting Housing

Dear Chair Fahey and Members of the Committee on Housing:

I'm writing to provide strong support for HB 2095, which will require a one-year notice period for residents of regulated affordable housing who may be adversely impacted when an owner exits its contract with OHCS and the rent for their home is no longer restricted.

As you know, there is a critical shortage of housing affordable to Oregonians of modest means (at or below 60% of area median income). The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC) has become a valuable resource for creating such homes.

In many cases, local nonprofit developers commit to 50-60 years or longer of affordability. But for those properties developed by or sold to non-mission based owners, there may be an exit from program restrictions, and the displacement of vulnerable populations as these apartment homes become "market rate" rentals—with rents increasing as much as \$500 per month or more.

For example, The Woodsprings Apartments in Tigard is home to some 176 senior households on fixed incomes who have called Tigard home for many years, perhaps their entire lives. Their incomes are not going to increase in retirement, and they are unlikely to find a similarly affordable home for many years. If they apply for rental assistance through the Housing Authority, they may have a wait of four or more years. If they seek placement on a Waiting List at another local property housing seniors, they will also likely be waiting for several years.

Providing at least one year for lower-income households to embark on the search for a new home is the minimum an owner of this housing type should provide. Without this protection, too many are at risk of homelessness. We assume you will all support this common sense and fair measure. Thank you for taking the time to address this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sheila Greenlaw-Fink

Executive Director

