

March 11th, 2021

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Campos and Morgan, and Members of the Housing Committee,

My name is Alejandra Lilley, and I am with Oregon AFSCME. I am writing testimony in support of HB 2578, urging our legislators to invest in homeownership and accessible housing.

Accessible, affordable, and safe housing is a national crisis affecting many Oregonians. At the same time, the state's largest housing subsidy is a mortgage interest deduction – handing out tax breaks to Oregon's richest. Over 60% of the subsidy goes to the richest fifth of Oregonians. Low and middle-income homeowners rarely benefit from the deduction. While renters receive nothing.

The pandemic has further jeopardized housing stability and pushed the American Dream of homeownership further from the reaches of the masses. HB 2578 would trim off this hand-out to the wealthy and free up needed funds that would be better used addressing the housing crisis. The amount of money that would be freed – the mortgage deduction costs Oregon over \$1 billion dollars per budget period – is staggering and could make a generational difference for many Oregonians.

This modest reform would eliminate the deduction for vacation homes in favor of providing \$100 million towards the housing crisis, per budget period.

I urge you to stand for Oregonians and vote yes on HB2578.

Sincerely,
Alejandra Lilley, Organizer-in-Training
Oregon AFSCME

