



We build strength, stability, self-reliance and shelter.

March 16, 2021

RE: SB 8 Support Testimony

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shannon Vilhauer, and I am the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon. In collaboration with other affordable housing developers across the state, I am writing to share our organization's strong support for SB 8.

Habitat for Humanity helps families to achieve stability by building and selling them a key asset: their home. Habitat homeowners pay down an average of \$50,000 in mortgage principal during the first 10 years of ownership, facilitating the very real intergenerational transfer of wealth. We have a proven record of helping to close our state's minority homeownership gap. Over 10% of the households we serve have at least one member with a permanent disability. The average median income of Habitat homebuyers statewide is 41%. That's approximately \$32,000 in annual earnings for a family of four. Thanks to Habitat's diligent homebuyer selection process and financial education, our mortgage repayment rate exceeds 98%.

To deliver our mission, Habitat for Humanity must first find and secure land on which to build homes. In many Oregon cities, faith communities have provided their local Habitat for Humanity affiliates with access to property they own at discounted prices. SB 8 will remove technical hurdles to this type of mission-aligned transaction, supporting our shared goal of increasing Oregon's supply safe, stable and affordable homes.

Habitat for Humanity also supports the way that SB 8 implements a density bonus, to enable all developers of affordable housing to reach more Oregonians in needs of a healthy and stable to sleep at night.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon and the 25 Habitat for Humanity affiliates we serve, thank you for your service, and for your attention to this critical request. We strongly encourage you support SB 8.

With heartfelt appreciation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shannon M. Vilhauer".

Shannon M. Vilhauer, Executive Director