

March 30, 2021

MMC

**Metropolitan
Mayors'
Consortium**

Mayor Lacey Beaty

City of Beaverton

Mayor Brian Hodson

City of Canby

Mayor Jeffrey Dalin

City of Cornelius

Mayor Gery Schirado

City of Durham

Mayor Brian Cooper

City of Fairview

Mayor Peter Truax

City of Forest Grove

Mayor Travis Stovall

City of Gresham

Mayor Tom Ellis

City of Happy Valley

Mayor Steve Callaway

City of Hillsboro

Mayor Ken Gibson

City of King City

Mayor Joe Buck

City of Lake Oswego

Mayor Mark Hardie

City of Maywood Park

Mayor Mark Gamba

City of Milwaukie

Mayor Teri Lenahan

City of North Plains

Mayor Lyles Smith

City of Oregon City

Mayor Ted Wheeler

City of Portland

Mayor Walt Williams

City of Rivergrove

Mayor Keith Mays

City of Sherwood

Mayor Jason Snider

City of Tigard

Mayor Randy Lauer

City of Troutdale

Mayor Frank Bubenik

City of Tualatin

Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle

City of Vancouver (ex officio)

Mayor Jules Walters

City of West Linn

Mayor Julie Fitzgerald

City of Wilsonville

Mayor Scott Harden

City of Wood Village

Representative Julie Fahey, Chair
House Committee On Housing
Oregon State Legislature

Re: Support for HB 2007

Dear Chair Fahey and Members of the Committee,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium (MMC) represents the mayors of twenty-five cities in the Portland Metro Area, collectively home to over 1.7 million Oregonians. The MMC writes to express its support for HB 2007, which aims to address racial disparities in homeownership.

Homeownership is one of the most effective ways to build generational wealth, but our country's legacy of redlining and other racist practices have created barriers for people of color to purchase homes that still exist today. This inequity is reflected in the disparity of homeownership rates: only 35% of African Americans and 42% of Latinx Oregonians own their homes compared to 65% of White people. In addition to allowing Oregon Housing and Community Services to provide grants and loans to individuals for down payment assistance, HB 2007 helps organizations to fund the financial literacy education and pre- and post-purchase counseling services that are also an essential component of helping people to purchase their first home.

The MMC is also strongly supportive of the investments associated with HB 2007 that are outlined in Governor Brown's 2021-23 budget: \$30 million for construction of affordable homes for ownership, \$10 million in down payment assistance to support the expansion of the HOPE program, and \$2 million for language access for OHCS homeownership programs. Owning a home can alter a family's financial circumstances for generations, and the MMC supports increased state investment in the programs that can help more people of color in our communities to thrive.

The mayors of the MMC urge the committee's support for HB 2007 and appreciate the efforts made by the Oregon Legislature to improve quality of life for those who need it most. Thank you for your leadership and your consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium