



Columbia Cascade Housing Corp.

April 9, 2021

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

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

I write to you today on behalf of Columbia Cascade Housing Corporation in support of SB 5505, and the inclusion of \$250 million for affordable housing and \$50 million for permanent supportive housing in Article XI-Q General Obligation bonds.

Columbia Cascade Housing Corporation (CCHC) promotes and administers affordable housing solutions for lower income households in Hood River, Wasco and Sherman Counties in Oregon as well as Klickitat and Skamania Counties in Washington. One of the ways we work toward our mission is through the development of for sale and for rent affordable homes.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, Oregon was already experiencing a housing crisis, and too many of our neighbors and community members were experiencing housing instability. In Hood River County half of renters with extremely low incomes are paying more than 50% of their income in rent. For Wasco County, three out of four renters with extremely low incomes are paying more than 50% of their income in rent. This rent burden continues alongside the escalation of housing costs across our service area and across the state. We need to build more affordable homes.

Since 2015, the Legislature has committed millions in general obligation bonds to the LIFT program, and over 3,600 affordable homes have been or are being built. These homes are being built in communities across Oregon – Newport to Ontario, Klamath Falls to Astoria, Roseburg, Hermiston, Eugene, Bend, Redmond, and Sisters, and everywhere in between. With additional resources, we can support more of this work and develop affordable homes for rent and for sale in our service area as well.

Beyond acknowledging that additional resources dedicated to the production of affordable homes will assist us in meeting our mission, we understand that a safe and stable place to call home is a basic human need. We believe that healthy habits take root more easily in stable, affordable homes. We know that when people spend less on their home they're able to contribute to the local economy and get other basic needs met.

We urge your support for the inclusion of \$250 million for affordable housing and \$50 million for permanent supportive housing in Article XI-Q General Obligation bonds in SB 5505.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the State of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Joel Madsen
Executive Director



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