

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 am writing to you today on behalf of Housing Development Center 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.

Housing Development Center is a mission-driven nonprofit consulting group based in Portland. For 27 years we have worked to strengthen opportunities for low-income families and individuals by assisting community-based developers and housing authorities to develop and preserve affordable homes in communities across Oregon and southwest Washington.

At Housing Development Center, we believe everyone in Oregon deserves access to a safe and stable place to call home. But we know that too many of our neighbors, including frail seniors, veterans, and schoolchildren, are struggling against housing instability and homelessness—and that the COVID pandemic has worsened the impacts of these experiences.

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 build projects across Oregon to provide safe and stable places to call home for members of our communities.

As development consultants we work with multiple partners to create financing strategies for affordable housing developments that serve diverse communities. We know that the LIFT program is an essential funding resource, without which many developments would not be built. Continued investment in this critical program is needed to address Oregon's continued housing affordability crisis and its devastating impacts on families and underserved communities in our state.

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,

Joni Hartmann, Executive Director, Housing Development Center

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