



April 9, 2021

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

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

I write to you on behalf of Home Forward in support of SB5505 and the Housing Alliance request for \$250 million in General Obligation, Article XI-Q bonds to build affordable homes across Oregon through the Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) program. Home Forward is a Public Housing Authority (PHA) and largest provider of affordable housing in the state. Home Forward serves more than 17,500 households earning low-incomes in Multnomah County by developing affordable housing, providing supportive services, and administrating short and long term rent assistance. The mission of Home Forward is to assure that the people of the community are sheltered. At Home Forward, we are stewards of public resources and champions for those who need them. In Multnomah County, there are only 23 affordable homes for every 100 households who need one.

In the next two years, Home Forward plans to apply for LIFT funds to build 200 new units of affordable housing on land where we currently have site control. One of the projects is a collaboration with Portland Community College to develop 100 affordable homes. These homes will primarily serve families whose lack of affordable housing is a primary factor in risk of their child being placed in out of home care and foster youth aging out of care. The second project would replace 70 units of existing affordable housing and add 100 new affordable homes for people earning low incomes in a high opportunity neighborhood.

Everyone deserves a place to call home. Access to a home that you can afford brings the stability that is necessary to thrive: at school, at work, as a member of your community. When we build affordable housing, we are not only building homes for individual people, we are creating the foundation for strong and connected communities. Across Oregon, we have affordable housing developers who are ready to build safe, stable, and affordable homes for rent and for purchase. With additional resources, we can support more of this work and build projects across Oregon.

Thank you for your service and the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 5505 today. Please contact Taylor Smiley Wolfe, Director of Policy and Planning, Home Forward at 503-957-8760 or taylor.smileywolfe@homeforward.org regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

Taylor Smiley Wolfe
Director of Policy and Planning
Home Forward