



# HOUSING ALLIANCE

May 4, 2021

Senate Committee on Housing and Development  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Linthicum, Members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to express our support for HB 2364A, which would make improvements to our laws that allow residents of manufactured home communities to purchase their parks.

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a coalition of more than ninety organizations from all parts of the state. Our members have come together with the knowledge that housing opportunity is the foundation on which all of our success is built – individual success as students, parents, workers, and community members as well as the success of our communities. We represent a diverse set of voices including affordable housing developers, residents of affordable housing, local jurisdictions, and organizations working to meet basic needs in every corner of our state.

All Oregonians deserve a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Today, we simply don't have enough affordable homes for people who need them. People – our neighbors and members of our community – are struggling with homelessness, housing instability, rent burdens, and to make ends meet and put food on the table, particularly during this pandemic.

Across Oregon, people with low incomes and seniors on fixed incomes live in manufactured home communities. Manufactured homes and the parks in which they are located have been a key source of affordable housing for many residents across Oregon. In total, there are over 62,000 manufactured homes in over 1,000 communities across Oregon.

Manufactured homes are often one of the last sources of affordable housing in communities, and these communities are home to seniors, people who experience disabilities, agricultural workers, and other people with low incomes. These communities are more than just affordable homes, but are communities.

Residents own their home, but rent the space their home resides on. Today's manufactured homes are not mobile, and residents have often sunk their savings into buying their homes. Since 2019, the increases that a landlord can give a tenant for their rent has been capped, but owners of manufactured homes in these communities may still find the increases to be unmanageable and unaffordable.

Over the past several years, the problems with investment firms purchasing manufactured home parks, and subsequent problems have been well documented by media sources, including Financial Times<sup>1</sup>, Last Week Tonight with John Oliver<sup>2</sup>, and most recently, the New Yorker<sup>3</sup>. These articles note that investment firms find parks to be an attractive investment because “*They see the parks as reliable sources of passive income—assets that generate steady returns and require little effort to maintain.*”<sup>4</sup> Investor owners often bring challenges for the residents, including a lack of investment or money to maintain the park, and it may fall into disrepair, all while residents experience continued rent increases. As one testifier noted this morning, it helps when park owners see their tenants as human beings, and not just income.

One strategy is to purchase the park, either as a resident owned cooperative or as a non-profit or housing authority, in order to keep it affordable. In previous sessions, a law was passed which requires owners to notify residents of a sale, and give them the opportunity to purchase the park.

However, organizations that work either to purchase the park from owners to maintain it as affordable housing or residents who seek to form a cooperative in order to purchase the park note that the existing law doesn’t work as it should be, and that improvements are needed. HB 2364A would expand on previous work done to increase the opportunity to purchase parks and help them remain affordable.

We urge your support of HB 2364A. Thank you very much for your time, and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,



Alison McIntosh  
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/3c87eb24-47a8-11ea-ae2-9ddbdc86190d>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCC8fPQOaxU>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/03/15/what-happens-when-investment-firms-acquire-trailer-parks>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/03/15/what-happens-when-investment-firms-acquire-trailer-parks>

## Housing Alliance Members

1000 Friends of Oregon  
211info  
Aging in the Gorge  
Benton Habitat for Humanity  
Bienestar  
Bradley Angle  
BRIDGE Housing  
Business for a Better Portland  
CASA of Oregon  
Central City Concern  
Chrisman Development  
Church Women United of Lane County  
City of Beaverton  
City of Eugene  
City of Forest Grove  
City of Hillsboro  
City of Hood River  
City of Portland  
City of Tigard  
Clackamas County  
Coalition of Community Health Clinics  
Coalition of Housing Advocates  
College Housing Northwest  
Community Action Partnership of Oregon  
Community Action Team  
Community Alliance of Tenants  
Community Development Partners  
Community Housing Fund  
Community Partners for Affordable Housing  
Community Vision  
Cornerstone Community Housing  
DevNW  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Fair Housing Council of Oregon  
Farmworker Housing Development Corp.  
FOOD for Lane County  
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon  
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East  
Hacienda CDC  
Home Forward  
Homes for Good  
Housing Authorities of Oregon  
Housing Authority of Clackamas County  
Housing Development Center  
Housing Oregon  
Human Solutions  
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization

Impact Northwest  
Innovative Housing, Inc.  
Interfaith Alliance on Poverty  
JOIN  
Lane County Health and Human Services  
League of Oregon Cities  
League of Women Voters of Oregon  
Lincoln County  
Looking Glass Community Services  
Mainstream Housing Inc.  
Metro  
Mid-Columbia Housing Authority  
NAYA Family Center  
Neighborhood Partnerships  
NeighborImpact  
NeighborWorks Umpqua  
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing  
Northwest Housing Alternatives  
Northwest Pilot Project  
Oregon AFSCME Council 75  
Oregon Coalition of Christian Voices  
Oregon Center for Public Policy  
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness  
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Oregon Food Bank  
Our Children Oregon  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives  
Portland Homeless Family Solutions  
Portland: Neighbors Welcome  
Proud Ground  
Raphael House  
REACH CDC  
Residents Organizing for Change (ROC) Oregon  
Rogue Action Center  
Rose CDC  
St. Francis Shelter  
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.  
ShelterCare  
Sisters Habitat for Humanity  
Sponsors, Inc.  
SquareOne Villages  
Street Roots  
Think Real Estate  
Transition Projects  
Washington County  
Welcome Home Coalition