



April 23, 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 Salem Housing Authority in support of SB 5534, and the inclusion of \$100 million to preserve and maintain existing affordable in Lottery bonds.

Preservation of affordable housing in the Salem community is a top priority. The Salem Housing Authority most recently completed a full exterior and interior renovation of 40+ year old Public Housing with the help of these funds. Many affordable projects are aging out and exceeding their lifespan. Rather than allowing obsolescence and removing them from the market completely, we have opportunities to renovate and serve our community for generations to come.

A safe and stable place to call home is a basic human need.

All Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Over the years, we've built thousands of affordable apartment homes in towns and cities across Oregon. Some of these affordable apartment homes were built by private owners using resources from the federal government, including rental assistance which helps households with low incomes to pay the rent every month. In many of our smaller communities, these buildings are the only affordable apartment homes available.

These apartment homes have provided stability, safety, and affordability for area residents for the last thirty-plus years. The people who live in these homes are seniors, people experiencing disabilities, and families just starting out.

Today, we have the opportunity to reinvest in these homes and ensure they will be safe and available for the next generation. Just like schools or hospitals, affordable rental homes need regular investments to ensure they stay safe for people to live in. Our investments are needed to replace the roof, make repairs to the exterior of the buildings, or to ensure the safety and habitability of these homes for generations to come. Oregon needs to steward these aging homes for future generations without raising rents.

The City of Salem, who serves as the commission for the Housing Authority, has established key legislative priorities supporting the full funding of affordable housing programs. These programs are a perfect example of how local and state government can work together, increase the supply of affordable housing and address homelessness through long term housing stability.



Currently, the Salem Housing Authority is anticipating applying for preservation dollars that will help us replace our remaining public housing stock that is 40+ years old. Maintaining the existing structures is no longer a financially feasible option. We will seek these dollars alongside other funding opportunities and build new housing in Salem. With these funds, we can restore and rebuild 100+ units of subsidized housing.

We urge your support for the inclusion of \$100 million to preserve and maintain affordable housing in communities across Oregon.

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

Sincerely,

Jessica Blakely

Jessica Blakely
Asset Manager
Salem Housing Authority