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May 7, 2021

Public Testimony
Oregon Legislature
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Capital Construction

Support for SB 5534 - increasing the amount of lottery bonds to preserve affordable housing

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is Trell Anderson, and I am the Executive Director of Northwest Housing Alternatives. As a nonprofit, mission and community-based organization, we offer nearly 2,000 affordable rental homes across 16 counties in Oregon to seniors, families, Veterans, and people with disabilities. We offer deep programming through Resident Services like our Senior Healthy Homes initiative, and supporting kids who live in our communities to have successful educational outcomes and graduate from high school.

We have over 800 additional affordable rental homes in development in communities such as Tigard, Portland, Florence, and Ontario. ***We have direct experience acquiring and preserving affordable housing properties that were previously privately owned and now preserved for ever as affordable.***

When privately owned publicly funded affordable housing properties reach the end of their compliance periods, the private owners can convert to market rate. Today's hot housing market provides a significant incentive (profit) for private owners to do this. ***Residents who are seniors, people with disabilities, Veterans, and families with children are put at high risk of homelessness because there are few other affordable options.***

By increasing the amount of lottery bonds and dedicating increased amounts to preserving affordable housing, "expiring use" properties can be acquired and preserved by organizations like NHA. SB 5534 would help maintain housing stability for thousands of tenants across the state.

I am supportive of SB 5534 and ask for your support as well. ***Please do not miss this opportunity to make a difference in the preservation of homes currently affordable across the state.***

Sincerely, 