

## Testimony in Support for HB 3275

May 5, 2021

Chair Nathanson, Vice Chair Reschke, and members of the committee,

My name is Khanh Pham, Representative for House District 46. I am honored to testify as chief sponsor for HB 3275.

Across Oregon, organizations like Proud Ground and Habitat for Humanity provide **affordable** homes for sale to people with moderate to low incomes. These non-profits offer down payment assistance grants, technical assistance, and other support to bring homeownership within reach for Oregon families, many of whom come from historically underserved communities. I am honored to bring this bill forward in collaboration with these partners that serve as a bridge to homeownership for many families across the state.

New developments and down payment assistance grants are often established using the **community land trust** model, in which **a non-profit owns the land** underneath the homes, and ensures permanent affordability. This is especially important to support people of color and working class Oregonians who can utilize these programs to overcome well-documented structural barriers.

HB 3275 provides us the opportunity to make critical improvements that will remove barriers faced by these homeowners and to create incentives to increase the utilization of these models across the state. This bill would reduce tax payment for low/moderate income homeowners and extend the practice that some counties have adopted of creating an option to exempt the land under the houses for homeowners who purchased a community land trust home.

We are excited that this passed unanimously in the House Committee on Housing as one tool to help address our current affordable housing crisis. We have continued to engage with a broad group of stakeholders on this bill including DOR, county assessors, housing non-profits, and homeowners. In particular, we have had productive conversations with county assessors to ensure smooth implementation of the changes proposed in this bill. We are appreciative of the feedback that we have incorporated into the -2 amendment to clarify the process for claiming exemptions and aligning with best practices for implementation.

I firmly believe that we should seek to address our housing crisis while also laying the groundwork for **homeownership**. We must seek innovative ways to encourage homeownership and address the barriers experienced by communities of color and other underserved communities. This property tax exemption is an effective and necessary tool to incentivize and support more permanently affordable home ownership opportunities at a time when Oregon urgently needs them throughout the state. Therefore, I urge your support for HB 3275. Thank you.