



HOUSING ALLIANCE

May 7, 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, members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance regarding SB 5534. The Housing Alliance requests that you approve \$100 million in Lottery Bonds to support the maintenance and preservation of affordable rental homes across Oregon.

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.

We believe that all Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

In every corner of Oregon apartment homes have been built to make sure families, seniors, and people with disabilities have safe, stable, and affordable housing. 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 rental homes are seniors, people experiencing disabilities, and families just starting out.

Providing grant funding through lottery bonds and SB 5534 will help to maintain these affordable apartment homes for the next generation. Lottery bond resources to preserve existing affordable housing are critical to our efforts to maintain these properties, and will provide an opportunity to assist in purchasing and reinvesting in these apartment homes to ensure they will be safe and available for the next generation.

Just like schools or hospitals, affordable rental homes are part of our community's infrastructure, and need investments to ensure the homes are around for the next generation. Investments will ensure this precious resource continues to be available for generations of Oregonians to come.

We have identified significant need to invest in existing affordable housing of over \$400 million for the next three biennia. During the 2019-21 biennium, due to the cancelled lottery bonds sale in the spring of 2021, and the drop in lottery revenues due to COVID-19 related closures, no specific funds were dedicated to the maintenance and preservation of affordable housing.

New resources will support the maintenance of existing, publicly supported affordable housing, such as housing built with federal rental subsidies and assistance from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and US Department of Agriculture Rural Development; public housing in need of repair and renovation; manufactured home parks; and publicly supported housing built through the existing federal or state programs or other resources in need of reinvestment. We are requesting that the Legislature approve these lottery bonds for the maintenance and preservation for all publicly supported housing, as defined in ORS 456.250.

Housing developers across Oregon are ready with plans and proposals to maintain this vital source of housing in communities across our state, and there is a long track record of success in maintaining this housing. We ask that the Legislature invest \$100 million in Lottery Bonds to maintain these affordable rental homes for Oregonians with low incomes.

Affordable housing is an important part of our community infrastructure, and the people who call these apartments home are vital members of our community. We need to make sure we're taking care of the affordable rental homes built in communities across Oregon as they are critical to our future. We need to protect these important community assets and the people that call them home.

Investing in the basics – a safe, stable, affordable home for Oregonians with low incomes – has positive ripple effects across our state. We know what home, and what stable housing, means to all of us. When people have safe and stable housing, it has important and significant benefits. Kids are able to focus on the things that matter – being kids, doing their homework – instead of worrying about where their families will sleep at night. Parents are able to focus on work. Safe and stable housing that people can afford is key to accessing opportunity.

We urge your strong support of \$100 million in lottery bonds to invest in safe, stable, and affordable homes across Oregon.

Thank you very much for your time, and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,



Alison McIntosh
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

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
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