



To: **House Housing Committee**

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Campos, Vice-Chair Morgan and Members of the Committee:

I am writing from Habitat for Humanity Portland Region, the newly merged affiliate that now covers Multnomah, northern Clackamas, and western Washington Counties with affordable homeownership services. Especially in this COVID-19 pandemic, we are seeing a just how acute the region's housing crisis is affecting both homeowners and renters earning a low-income. We are grateful for the work being done by your committee to ensure that homeownership is something that is accessible and affordable to Oregonians.

With that, I am writing to share Habitat Portland Region's strong support for HB2283. We believe that by improving the land division process in this measure, it will would provide much needed space for middle housing in our rapidly developing communities. Especially in the Portland-Metro region, we see that a clear sign of generational wealth is rooted in homeownership. Unfortunately, for many, and especially for People of Color, there are too few opportunities to entry-level homeownership. We see this measure as a clear and concrete way to change that.

At Habitat, we see that home equity is the primary wealth-building vehicle for middle-class Americans. It is essential not only for the stability of our communities, but also for the local tax-base, that we ensure more of our neighbors can access the opportunity to invest in their future and plant their roots in the places they call home. Doing so helps to prevent instability in times of chaos, and will help everyone in Oregon, not just those who own their home.

Implementing this administrative, fee-simple land division process for middle housing (like duplexes, triplexes and cottage clusters) will help to increase the overall supply of entry-level homes for purchase across Oregon. As vacancy rates drop and home values soar, we need middle housing more than ever. It is why we strongly encourage you to support HB 2283.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Messinetti".

Steve Messinetti
President & CEO
Habitat for Humanity Portland Region