



*Sheila Stiley, Board
chair – NW Coastal
Housing*

February 2, 2022

*Kymberly Horner –
Vice-chair - Portland
Community
Reinvestment Inc.*

Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

*Rachael Duke,
Secretary -
Community Partners
for Affordable
Housing*

Re: Support for SB 1557, Preservation tenant assistance

*Trell Anderson,
Treasurer –NW
Housing Alternatives*

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the
Committee:

*David Brandt,
Housing Works*

Thank you for the opportunity to offer Housing Oregon's support
for SB 1557, which would create a pilot program to protect
residents of publicly supported affordable housing from
displacement when a property's use restrictions expire and are
threatened with transitioning to market rate.

*Wakan Alferes
Homes for Good*

*Ernesto Fonseca -
Hacienda CDC*

Housing Oregon is a membership-based statewide association of
affordable housing nonprofit developers committed to serving and
supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs
spectrum – from homeless to homeowner. We are working towards
a day when every Oregonian has a safe and healthy place to call
home.

*Maria Elena Guerra -
Farmworker Housing
Development Corp*

*Garrick Harmel –
Casa of Oregon*

All regulated affordable housing has use restrictions typically
between thirty to sixty or more years. Many are funded with federal
Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) with use restrictions
expiring at the end of thirty years. According to Oregon Housing
and Community Services (OHCS), over 5,000 affordable rental
homes in Oregon have rent restrictions that will be expiring
between now and 2031.

*Nkenge Harmon
Johnson – Urban
League of Portland*

*Foster Martinez – St.
Vincent de Paul Lane
County*

These homes provide stability, safety, and affordability for
thousands of Oregon families, seniors, and people with disabilities.
Many of them are already paying too much of their income towards
rent. With historically low vacancy rates in communities across
Oregon, there are limited alternatives for

*Kristy Rodriguez –
Housing Authority of
Malheur & Harney
Counties*

those confronted with the prospect of having to seek new housing. The COVID-19 pandemic and economic turmoil have only exacerbated the crisis.

There are currently two buildings with nearly 400 units – one in Tigard and one in Salem – where these use restrictions have expired. Several of our mission-driven and community-based nonprofits are attempting to purchase at least one of the buildings and prevent the loss of yet more affordable housing. To date, these efforts have been unsuccessful.

SB 1557 would provide a modest rental assistance subsidy to residents who live in buildings where the use restrictions have expired, and the owner has converted the property to a market-rate rental. This subsidy would be limited to the amount of the rent increase that a resident experiences as a result of the conversion to market-rate housing.

To control program costs, the rent assistance proposed in SB 1557 would only support residents who live in the building prior to conversion and have no other tenant-based assistance. Residents would remain eligible as long as they remain in the unit. The assistance is not transferrable. The program would be administered through the local Public Housing Authority.

Housing Oregon recognizes the State has made historic investments in affordable housing. But not all of these expiring properties will benefit from new preservation resources and those residents are at risk. We need to do all we can to protect the residents in those properties from displacement and possibly homelessness.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions at 971-347-9508 or stacie@housingoregon.org.

Sincerely,

Stacie Sanders
Director of Policy and Advocacy
Housing Oregon