



February 2, 2023

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Dexter, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Helfrich, Representatives Cate, Fahey, Harman, Helm, Javadi, Levy and Wright:

I write to you on behalf of Home Forward in strong support of House Bill 3042 which proposes protections for tenants living in publicly supported housing with expiring affordability restrictions.

Home Forward is a Public Housing Authority (PHA) and the largest provider of affordable housing in the state of Oregon. We serve more than 15,500 Multnomah County low-income households by providing affordable housing, administering rent assistance, and providing supportive services. Our mission is to assure that the people of the community are sheltered. We own and manage over 6,000 homes throughout Multnomah County. We also provide households with services which range from housing stability to health and wellness. Meanwhile, we fund rent assistance for thousands of households residing in private unregulated housing that we do not directly oversee. We administer emergency rent assistance programs that benefit landlords and tenants alike, including Short Term Rent Assistance, the Landlord Compensation Fund, and the Landlord Guarantee Fund.

We know that the combination of increasing the stock of affordable housing and providing greater housing stability are the keys to addressing our housing and homelessness crisis. The expiration of affordability requirements on formerly publicly supported housing directly undermines both of these efforts.

Over the next ten years, 7,500 units of affordable housing will face the end of their use restrictions resulting in the involuntary displacement of many of the low-income tenants unable to afford market rent for their homes. These tenants deserve advance notice of the expiring use restrictions and the extra time to locate new housing, if necessary, that a safe harbor on exorbitant rent increases provides. Not only will HB 3042 likely result in a decrease in evictions for nonpayment of rent and increased renter stability, but it will increase the likelihood that some of this housing will be preserved as affordable.

For all these reasons, we see this legislation as necessary to combat the housing and homelessness crisis throughout the state. We urge you to pass HB 3042. Thank you for the opportunity to offer support. Please contact me at christina.dirks@homeforward.org or (503) 348-1196 regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

Christina Dirks
Interim Director of Policy and Planning