



Monday, February 6, 2023

*Sheila Stiley, Board
chair – NW Coastal
Housing*

*Kymerly Horner,
Vice-chair - Portland
Community
Reinvestment Inc.*

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

*Kristy Rodriguez,
Treasurer - Housing
Authority of Malheur
& Harney Counties*

*Trell Anderson –
Northwest Housing
Alternatives*

*David Brandt -
Housing Works*

*Wakan Alferes -
Homes for Good*

*Rita Grady – Polk
CDC*

*Maria Elena Guerra -
Farmworker Housing
Development Corp*

*Nkenge Harmon
Johnson – Urban
League of Portland*

*Brad Ketch –
Rockwood CDC &
Community Dev.
Corp. of Oregon*

*Erica Mills –
NeighborWorks
Umpqua*

*Shannon Vilhauer –
Habitat for Humanity
Oregon*

Senator Kayse Jama
Chair, Senate Housing and Development Committee
900 Court St NE, S-409
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Honorable Chair Jama and members of the Committee:

Housing Oregon strongly supports Senate Bill 225, which will ensure coordination of affordable housing resources and a clear financing process in the state of Oregon.

Housing Oregon is a membership-based statewide association of over 80 affordable housing community development corporations (CDCs) committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner. Our members invest their time, energy, and limited funds into pre-development work to make affordable housing projects happen. Our members need SB 225 to increase certainty and contain construction costs to make these projects pencil out.

Private Activity Bonds (PABs) are a critical tool in supporting affordable housing development across the state. However, the current lack of coordination in the selection of affordable rental housing projects for PAB resources creates uncertainty in the number of projects that can be completed. This uncertainty can lead to increased costs due to the blackout period that begins at the new biennium, which can result in cost increases due to tax credit pricing among other market factors.

Senate Bill 225 will address these issues by ensuring that PAB resources for affordable housing are allocated exclusively through the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), allowing OHCS to suballocate PABs to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) who will still issue the bonds. Additionally, the bill will allow OHCS to move forward with financial closings for affordable housing developments during the blackout period, preventing costs increases. This component necessitates an emergency clause on this bill to avoid cost increases this July.

P.O. Box 8427, Portland, OR 97207

Housing Oregon strongly supports Senate Bill 225, and we also support the -1 amendment. This bill is a critical step towards ensuring that the state's affordable housing resources are being used effectively and efficiently. By coordinating the allocation of PAB resources and allowing OHCS to move forward with financial closings during the blackout period, this bill will help prevent cost increases and support the development of thousands of affordable homes statewide.

In conclusion, we strongly urge this committee to support SB 225, it is vital for fairness and justice in our communities. Thank you very much for your consideration of our comments, and for your service to our state. You can reach me at 971-347-8503 or kevin@housingoregon.org

Kevin Cronin

Director of Member Relations and Industry Support
Housing Oregon