



February 22, 2023

Representative Maxine Dexter
Chair, House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
900 Court St NE, H-283
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for House Bill 2001

Dear Chair Dexter and Members of the Committee:

As we all know, housing and homelessness are among the most urgent issues across Oregon. House Bill 2001, which addresses our state's urgent housing needs and long-term housing supply challenges with immediate action on several fronts, is an important package of reforms we urge the legislature to support.

HB 2001, with the amendments the committee will consider on February 23, includes several critical elements of the response to our statewide housing crisis. The bill will:

- Provide essential and reasonable negotiated improvements to Oregon's eviction statutes to promote stability and payment rather than displacement and eviction.
- Expand investments in youth homelessness prevention, prioritizing services for school-aged children who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and their families.
- Provide \$20 million in grant/loan funds for constructing low-cost modular housing in wildfire-affected areas and for low- and moderate-income households.
- Provide \$3 million in seed financing for the construction of affordable workforce rental housing.
- Address our long-term housing production challenges by establishing enforceable standards for local jurisdictions to promote the production of abundant, equitable, affordable and diverse housing options.

HB 2001 reflects the urgency of the crisis too many Oregonians are experiencing due to lack of housing, inadequate services, and eviction statutes designed for displacement instead of stability.

We are grateful to legislative leaders for your bipartisan, bicameral and immediate action on this package. These measures will help our communities respond to the statewide homelessness crisis, improve stability and safety for renters across the state, and take essential steps to resolve our long-standing housing supply challenges.

Sincerely,

Cole Merkel
Co-Director, HereTogether
cole@heretogetheroregon.org

HereTogether—a 250+ member coalition comprising service providers, business leaders, faith leaders, advocates and more—strives to create a Portland metro region where homelessness is rare and brief by advocating for near term and permanent solutions, systems change and accountability necessary to effectively scale up resources and serve our most vulnerable neighbors.