



March 3, 2023

To: Co-Chair Woods and Co-Chair Gomberg and Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

RE: HB 5511 – Support

Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Gomberg, and Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development. For the record, my name is Creeana Bort, I am a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, and I represent the NAYA Action Fund located in Portland, OR. Founded by the community, for the community, the NAYA Action Fund is a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization with a mission to expand political advocacy and build electoral power in partnership with the Native community. The NAYA Action Fund provides tools to shape public policy, cultivate leadership, and elect champions for issues impacting Native people. Our vision of systemic change is youth-centered, family-driven, and elder guided. I write in support of Senate Bill 5511.

SB 5511 would work to address the ever-growing housing crisis in Oregon. It would allocate \$1.46B toward funding for Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) to help reduce the amount of unsheltered, rehouse those experiences houselessness, preserve housing units as well as build new ones, and increase homeownership all within the year. Governor Kotek's annual production target to produce 36,000 housing units per year is an ambitious goal for tackling an extreme housing and homelessness crisis that took years to create. According to the 2022 Point in Time Count, 39% of Oregon's houseless population are people of color. There was a recognizable increase in the homeless population that reported their situation was directly linked to the impacts of COVID-19, sitting at roughly one in four people. The Governor's recommended budget invests roughly \$1.1B in proven supply solutions, including OHCS' Local Innovation Fast Track (LIFT) Rental Program, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), and housing preservation programs. Our housing properties, such as Mamook Tokatee (To Make Beautiful) and Nesika Illahee (Our Place), help stabilize housing for some of our most vulnerable community members, providing a safe home at a fair price compared to the housing market. Making these investments towards homeownership are critical in overcoming the racial disparities in accessing homeownership and access to stable housing for communities of color. SB 5511 uplifts the work of the Joint Task Force to Address Racial Disparities in Homeownership and provides important recommendations that align with these budget recommendations to expand the creation of generational wealth for communities of color across Oregon.

The choices you make today will have inter-generational impacts on housing stabilization throughout the state. I urge you to consider what it would look like for families struggling to be met with relief rather than



fear and work to help create a future where barriers are diminished, and accessibility to prosperity is attainable. On behalf of the NAYA Action Fund, we urge your support of HB 5511.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Creana Bort".

Creana Bort
Advocacy and Policy Organizer