

Submitter: David Eppelsheimer

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Transportation and Economic Development

Measure: SB5511

My name is David Eppelsheimer and I am a Lutheran pastor serving in Hillsboro. I am also a part of the Leaven Community Land and Housing Coalition - an interfaith collective of more than 50 faith communities across Oregon devoted to using our land to build diverse affordable housing. One hundred percent of our congregations additionally serve unhoused and unstably housed people as core parts of our outreach services, from food pantries to rental support to advocacy.

I have heard too many stories, especially over the last couple of years, from folks, young people in particular, who cannot afford to rent an apartment, let alone purchase a home in our communities because the cost of housing is so incredibly high. Faith communities are often the safety net under the safety net. There is simply not enough we can do to save our communities and neighbors - many of them employed full time - from houselessness, hunger, and mental health crises for which there are simply not enough resources.

This is clearly an enormous systemic gap that needs an immediate systemic bridge. The Governor's budget is one such bridge, and we are strongly in support of this important and immediate solution to our crisis and encourage you to do so as well.

Thank you for your kind attention,
David Eppelsheimer