

Submitter: Jean Powers
On Behalf Of: Middle and low income taxpayers
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure: SB976

Chair Meek, Vice-Chair Boquist, and Members of the Committee,

The mortgage interest deduction is the largest housing subsidy in Oregon, yet it currently does nothing to protect renters and families experiencing housing instability. By passing SB 976, the state can finally cut off housing subsidies for wealthy families, and rededicate that revenue to families who lack access to a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. With so many Oregonians experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, it is unconscionable that we continue to subsidize families who are in no need of support from the state.

SB 976 can provide badly needed funding to address the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. The reforms in the bill SB 976 would work to address disparities in access to affordable homeownership opportunities, by dedicating saved revenue programs that help families achieve and retain homeownership, including down payment assistance, foreclosure counseling, and bolstering the Individual Development Account (IDA) program.

SB 976 does not eliminate the mortgage interest deduction. For most families across the state, SB 976 will result in no change in their tax obligations. Only when incomes rise beyond \$200,000 in adjusted gross income for the year will the mortgage interest deduction begin to phase out. For households with incomes over \$250,000 the mortgage interest deduction will be completely phased out.

I wholeheartedly support this bill as an issue of economic justice. I urge you to support it as well. Thank you for your time and for your service to the state.