



February 8th, 2024

Senate Committee on Housing and Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Senator Jama, Senator Anderson, Senator Knopp, Senator Patterson, and Senator Sollman:

I am writing to you as the Executive Director at Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH), a community housing development organization working in Washington and Multnomah Counties. We develop and operate affordable housing, support our residents with services, and provide homeless services for Washington County.

On behalf of CPAH, I strongly encourage you all to pass SB 1537 which includes the creation of the Housing Accountability and Production Office (HAPO), provides over \$500 million for moderate- and affordable-housing production, and other tools and strategies to increase housing production. As we are all aware, Oregon is experiencing a dire dual crises around housing affordability and homelessness. The good news is we know the solution to these challenges: to build more housing, quickly. Governor Kotek understands this and is why she has called for our state to build more than 440,000 units of new housing over the next 20 years to meet future demand and make up for our state's decades of historic housing underproduction.

Here at CPAH, we have firsthand experience with the various challenges that come with trying to develop new housing. As it stands, the review processes at the local level are not always equipped to approve the amount of newly created housing our state so desperately needs in an expedient manner. The creation of HAPO will help address this through providing technical assistance to local jurisdictions and a number of tools to streamline the development process, including producing ready-build plans and model codes.

Over the last several legislative sessions, including the 2023 session, several landmark pieces of policy were passed with the aim of boosting housing production across the state. HB 2001 passed last session established Oregon Housing Needs Analysis, which represents a long-term solution to housing underproduction in Oregon. **However, these previous efforts to move Oregon forward will be more effective if Oregon can hold jurisdictions accountable for this work.**

Critically, this package also includes over \$500M in investments to spur greater housing production by providing funding for vital infrastructure to support new housing development, and funding to moderate-income housing. As developers of affordable housing, there are many times where the only parcels available for us to develop are those which have been deemed more challenging by market-rate developers. Oftentimes one of the biggest challenges is bringing basic infrastructure like water and sewer to these properties. Providing financing for

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this infrastructure is a critical investment to bolster greater housing production, including affordable housing.

Additionally, while CPAH does not provide housing serving those between 120% and 60% Area Median Income, we recognize that a large driver for the lack of housing affordable for those with lower incomes is the heightened competition with higher-income households for the scarce amount of housing in our state. This competition helps drive displacement of lower income households from communities they have long called home. The development of more moderate-income housing will help decrease this competition and increase the amount of housing that can be affordable for those with lower incomes.

Thank you for your time and your dedication to serving all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rachael Duke'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Rachael' and the last name 'Duke' clearly legible.

Rachael Duke
Executive Director
CPAH

