



February 16, 2023

Representatives Fred Girod and Paul Holvey
Co-Chairs, Joint Committee On Ways and Means, Subcommittee On Capital Construction
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 5201

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey and Members of the Committee:

I write on behalf of Home Forward in support of House Bill 5201 and to urge the Committee to allocate \$30 million dollars from lottery backed bonds to the preservation of existing affordable housing.

Home Forward is a Public Housing Authority (PHA) and the largest provider of affordable housing in the state of Oregon. We serve more than 15,500 Multnomah County low-income households by providing affordable housing, administering rent assistance, and providing supportive services. We own and manage over 6,500 homes throughout Multnomah County. Our mission is to create a better community by providing housing stability through affordable housing development, housing choice expansion, services that support quality of life, and advocacy to improve local and national housing systems.

As we prioritize housing production this session, we also need to balance the stability and longevity of our existing affordable housing stock. These units are existing community assets providing current housing stability for some of our most vulnerable community members both today and into the future. Nearly 5,000 units of regulated affordable housing will lose their affordability restrictions in the next 5 years alone, resulting in nearly 5,000 low-income households facing housing instability and homelessness.

Housing preservation funds are also used to protect residents of manufactured housing parks, the largest source of unregulated affordable housing in our state. On average, 32 parks are put up for sale every year, threatening the housing of approximately 1,800 low-income households annually. During the 2021 biennium, 69 manufactured housing parks with a total of 3,665 homes were put up for sale. Due to scarce funding, only seven of those parks were preserved as affordable housing.

Funding in the 2023 biennium to OCHS for preservation of existing regulated affordable housing was insufficient to meet the preservation needs across our state. While the Legislature allocated \$50 million in 2023 to OHCS for preservation, OHCS estimates the cost of preserving existing regulated affordable housing is approximately \$200 million per biennium. While far short of the need, an investment of \$30 million in 2024 will support the preservation of approximately 400 affordable homes.

Home Forward urges the subcommittee's support for the inclusion of \$30 million for preservation funding through HB 5201. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact Christina Dirks, Director of Policy and Planning at (503) 348-1196 or christina.dirks@homeforward.org regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Dirks', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christina Dirks
Director of Policy and Planning
Home Forward