



We build strength, stability, self-reliance *and* shelter.

Feb. 4, 2025

To: Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

**RE: Support for Senate Bill 5528**

Dear Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Levy and Members of the Committee:

My name is Shannon Vilhauer and I am the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon. On behalf of our organization and the 23 local Habitat for Humanity affiliates we serve, we urge your strong support for Senate Bill 5528, the budget for the Department of Land Conservation and Development.

I have had the honor of serving on the Rulemaking Advisory Committee (RAC) for the implementation of HB 2001 passed in 2023, as well as the associated Housing Needs and Production Technical Assistance Committee and newly formed Housing Actions Work Group. In addition, I served on the RAC for HB 2003 passed in 2019, which launched the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis (OHNA) pilot methodology. Participating in that process helped to clarify the need for middle housing land division in Oregon. Together with the Home Builders Association, the Habitat for Humanity of Oregon network successfully advocated for SB 458 in 2021, making it possible for entry-level homeownership options to align with the increased production of “missing middle” housing.

Decades of housing underproduction in Oregon have resulted in the shortage of entry-level homes. The lack of available and appropriate housing supply has driven up unaffordability for everyone. Oregon’s Housing Needs Analysis makes it clear: **The state must invest in the production of new homes.** Local governments have the power to help mobilize appropriate sites for the construction of this much-needed housing and actively remove barriers to increased production, aiding for-profit and nonprofit developers alike.

As the OHNA process continues to unfold, it calls on city staff and elected leaders to shift from a mindset of regulating to one of catalyzing new single family, multifamily and middle housing home construction. Municipal leaders are urged to stimulate the construction of a variety of housing types, affordable to Oregonians who earn a broad range of incomes. Implementing OHNA will necessitate innovation, shared learning, accountability and continuous improvement.

Many of us are familiar with the image of what it takes to turn an ocean liner. Our state is trying to turn a whole fleet of municipalities of varying sizes and staff capacities. The Housing Accountability and Production Office (HAPO) is serving the role of a comms system, needed to help bring each ship into alignment, moving in a trajectory toward shared goals.

Key Policy Option Packages (POPs) designed to bring the OHNA process from the conceptual phase into an engine driving local home production include:

- POP 501: Continue Housing Accountability and Production Grant Funds

- POP 503: Increase Housing Planning TA Funding
- POP 505: Eliminate Middle Housing Barriers

The Housing Accountability and Production Office (HAPO) will support the adoption of statutes and procedures proven to expedite housing production at the local level. This body of work is critically needed. As well as ensuring accountability, HAPO will foster a housing production community of practice among Oregon municipalities.

Oregon cities have a variety of staffing levels and capacities. Providing technical assistance resources to support city staff as they work to catalyze local home production will be key. The scale of the task before us warrants our shared commitment to learning and growing at local levels.

Habitat for Humanity of Oregon and the 23 local Habitat for Humanity affiliates we serve are well-positioned to help meet Oregon's supply shortfalls. Your support of the critical investments included in Senate Bill 5528 will help to ensure that we succeed together.

Many of us envision an Oregon where we are all proud of the stable, flourishing communities we have built together—with urban, suburban and rural cities that include homes of varying sizes, configurations and costs. Thank you for working hard to bring us closer to this vision.

With heartfelt appreciation,



Shannon M. Vilhauer, Executive Director