



February 12, 2025

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 2698

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Anderson and Breese-Iverson, and Members of the Committee:

The City of Hillsboro writes in strong support for HB 2698, which establishes a statewide goal for homeownership. As Oregon strives to significantly increase housing production, a statewide homeownership goal is critical. Establishing a statewide priority for homeownership can help address the systemic barriers that have kept many Oregonians from accessing homeownership and building generational wealth.

HB 2698 aligns closely with Hillsboro's values and ongoing efforts to encourage housing production, equitable housing access, and community well-being. Hillsboro's recent Housing Capacity Analysis identified gaps in access to homeownership for Hillsboro residents. Furthermore, nearly half (48%) of Hillsboro's residents are people of color. People of color have historically had less access to homeownership and tend to be cost burdened more often than other residents. This means communities of color can experience elevated need for affordable housing, particularly ownership housing.

The City of Hillsboro has long been committed to creating a diverse housing stock, with particular emphasis on affordable housing (80% Area Median Income and below) and now middle-income housing (80%-120% Area Median Income) solutions and will be deepening that commitment through implementation of its recently adopted Housing Production Strategy (HPS). The City regularly works with partners such as Habitat for Humanity and Proud ground to deliver alternative ownership housing. Hillsboro's HPS includes strategies to continue and expand on these partnerships and encourage additional pathways to homeownership through townhomes, smaller detached housing units, and condominium units. Providing more homeownership opportunities was a top priority for the City Council, the Technical Advisory Committee, and members of the historically marginalized communities focus groups that informed development and adoption of the HPS.

Even with our local efforts, we recognize that the issue of homeownership affordability requires a broader, coordinated response at the state level. HB 2698 provides an essential framework for promoting policies and investments that prioritize homeownership across Oregon. Hillsboro is proud to join other communities in supporting HB 2698 to provide meaningful opportunities for homeownership and contribute to the long-term prosperity of our city and the state. We urge your support.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to continuing to work with you and other stakeholders to make Oregon a place where homeownership is within reach for all.

Sincerely,

Ariel Nelson, Government Relations Manager