



Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Shawn O'Neil Supporting HB 3503:

Innovative Housing Plan Provides Opportunity for Older Homes to Be Acquired by Lower-Income Residents Who Can Become Homeowners

Scheduled for public hearing on March 3, 2025, before the
House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

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

I am testifying on behalf of the City of Wilsonville in support of HB 3503.

For many years, the Wilsonville City Council has supported efforts to make home ownership more obtainable for our constituents. Home ownership has been demonstrated to be one of the key ways of building over time intergenerational family wealth. Furthermore, it offers more stable home environments and fosters stronger community connections for families with children. This bill provides an innovative approach for preserving affordable housing that otherwise would be converted to market-rate housing.

The bill requires that the Housing and Community Services Department disburse moneys to Community LendingWorks, a nonprofit Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) based in Oregon since 2011, to provide grants to purchase housing in Clackamas County that will be made available through a community land trust as affordable housing to first-time home buyers.

Clackamas County seeks to sell over 140 older homes with high maintenance costs from a portfolio known as "scattered sites." Due to disinvestment over time by the US Department Housing and Urban Development (HUD), this kind of voucher-supported housing is no longer being subsidized. The community land trust will own the land, and first time homebuyers will be able to buy into the house on the land and accrue equity instead of paying rent.

This proposal offers a good way to keep some of these scattered sites homes available to eligible lower-income homebuyers without having the houses vanish into market sales. The City appreciates your consideration and urges your support of HB 3503.

Shawn O'Neil, Mayor
City of Wilsonville