



March 10, 2025

To: House Committee on Rules

From: Peter Hainley, CASA of Oregon

Re: Support for HB 3493

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Pham and Members of the Committee,

My name is Peter Hainley. I am the executive director of CASA of Oregon. CASA has been working with local communities to create housing, facilities and asset building opportunities for 37 years. We were originally founded to address the lack of housing for farmworkers. And while that is still a primary focus, we also serve the housing needs of people through our Manufactured Housing Cooperative Development Center (MHCDC). The MHCDC works with residents to help them buy their community and operate it as resident-owned cooperative (ROC). To date, we have completed 28 conversions of 2000 units housing more than 3200 people.

It is because of this work that I ask you to support HB 3493. The ability to conduct our work in manufactured home communities is due to permission given to us by the owners when entering into a purchase and sales agreement (PSA). Had we wanted to engage residents on our own (absent a PSA) in an effort to form a cooperative, the owner can prevent us from engaging the residents to speak about our program.

HB 3493 will protect the rights of residents in manufactured dwelling parks and marinas to engage in political activities. This is a fundamental right that should be enjoyed by all, including residents of manufactured home communities. Given my experience working in these communities during my 34 years at CASA, I find it unusual that you can own your own home and yet someone else can determine whether or not you have access to one of the fundamental rights of our democratic society.

Restricting any political activity, particularly in light of these residents' inability to experience the full range of the benefits of homeownership, is a slight to the sensibility of what it means to be an American. It undermines the principles of what it means to have free and fair elections. This bill is a crucial step towards ensuring that all Oregonians have equal access to political discourse. I urge you to vote in favor of HB 3493.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and thank you for your service to the people of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Peter Hainley
Executive Director