



March 25, 2025

Joint Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Oregon Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 5011

Dear Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Gomberg, and Members of the Committee:

I write to you on behalf of Home Forward in strong support of HB 5011. This bill provides critical investments in affordable housing, homelessness prevention, and shelter operations.

Home Forward is the Public Housing Authority (PHA) for Multnomah County and the largest provider of affordable housing in the state of Oregon. We serve approximately 18,000 low-income households by providing affordable housing, administering rent assistance, and providing supportive services. We own over 7,200 affordable homes throughout Multnomah County and provide households with services which range from housing stability supports to health and wellness. Meanwhile, we fund rent assistance for over 12,000 households each month. Home Forward's 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.

To adequately respond to our housing and homelessness crisis, I urge you to prioritize the investments outlined in HB 5011. Investments of particular importance to Home Forward include:

- POP 515 - \$700M LIFT rental housing: Home Forward has benefited from LIFT funds to support both the new construction of affordable housing and the acquisition of like new market rate housing for conversion to affordable housing.
- POP 515 - \$80M LIFT for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH): Home Forward has benefited from these resources to bring more PSH units to Multnomah County and provide stability and supports for those who have previously experienced homelessness.
- POP 513 - \$8.6M General Funds for PSH Improvements: As the provider of over 300 PSH units, we know that the current service funding level is inadequate to adequately address the acuity of our residents. Increasing service level funding from \$10,000 to \$15,000 a unit will enhance services and mitigate the escalating costs experienced by affordable housing providers.
- POP 516 - \$2.5M General Fund for PSH Expansion for Rent Assistance and Services: Expanding the available PSH throughout the state is critical to addressing our homelessness crisis and provided individuals exiting homelessness the supports they need to thrive.

- POP 519 - \$161.4M in Lottery Revenue Bonds for Preservation: As we continue to prioritize housing production, we cannot lose sight of the ongoing need to preserve existing affordable housing. Not only is this a cost-effective solution but it provides ongoing stability for residents that call these communities home.

I would also highlight the need for HB 5011 to be amended to include a funding allocation of \$6M for the Expiring Affordable Housing Tenant Support Fund outlined in SB 31. This fund is a critical component of a larger effort to support tenants living in affordable housing facing the end of their restrictive use agreements. Over the next five years, 3,850 units of affordable housing will face the end of their affordability period. The reality is that even with POP 519 we will not be able to preserve all these unit thus it is imperative that we take proactive steps to ensure that these tenants—many of whom are low-income families, seniors, and individuals with disabilities—are not displaced and risk homelessness. The Expiring Affordable Housing Tenant Support Fund does just that.

I urge you to pass HB 5011 with amendments. Thank you for the opportunity to offer support. Please contact me at (503) 348-1196 or christina.dirks@homeforward.org regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

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

Christina Dirks
Director of Policy and Planning