

March 28, 2025

Senator Aaron Woods, Co-Chair
Representative David Gomberg, Co-Chair
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to voice my strong support of HB 5011, specifically the proposed \$500 million investment in the Local Innovation and Fast Track Housing Program. I am a Salem resident and the CEO of United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley. Our United Way is focused on senior housing in regard to **preventing** homelessness.

For seniors, affordable housing is a critical need in Salem/Keizer:

- According to the 2023 PIT count, Salem had 1488 homeless individuals. Of that, 429 were aged 50 and over. This was the largest group in this count.
- 63% of older adults, 55 and up, have an earned income below \$35,000 a year.
- In the past 30 years, the number of people 55 and older experiencing homelessness has jumped from 11% to 50%.
- In 2023 the average social security benefit was \$1782 per month.
- The average rent in Salem is between \$1100-\$1400 per month.
- For older adults, financial insecurity is a barrier to stable housing and house instability significantly impacts health.

The need for affordable housing for seniors is one part of a bigger approach to addressing homelessness in our state.

I respectfully request that you approve HB 5011. This funding will create a real-world solution to our senior homelessness issue and create a long-term replicable project.

Sincerely,

Rhonda
Rhonda Wolf
CEO



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