



DEVELOPING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

April 30, 2025

Senate Committee on Housing and Development  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: Support for HB 2698**

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson and Members of the Committee:

My name is Karen Saxe and I work at DevNW, an affordable housing development and asset-building agency serving Lane, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Marion, Polk and Clackamas Counties. We embark on comprehensive community development throughout our seven-county service area through services aimed at increasing financial stability for individuals and families as well as through economic and housing development.

We are one of a network of Regional Housing Centers across the state that provide financial, rental and pre-purchase education and counseling to support low- and moderate-income families in becoming first-time homebuyers. Our pre-purchase services demystify the homebuying process, helping clients connect with local lenders and real estate agents, plan for those unexpected homeownership expenses and avoid predatory lending practices. One-on-one counseling sessions ensure that our clients are ready to take the step to homeownership, that their financial and credit picture make them mortgage-ready and that they've assembled a team of professionals they can trust.

Homeownership is the single greatest way Americans build wealth, creating generational impact for families, stabilizing kids in school and ensuring a reliable workforce. Oregon has one of the lowest homeownership rates, hovering around 64%, ranking Oregon 43<sup>rd</sup> in the nation. We believe that setting a statewide homeownership goal is a concrete step to align state resources and policy behind shared goals of increasing homeownership and housing stability for families across Oregon.

Thank you for your work to help Oregonians achieve their dream of homeownership.

Sincerely,

Karen Saxe  
Director of Policy, Advocacy and Strategic Relationships

[devNW.org](http://devNW.org)



212 Main Street  
Springfield, OR 97477

P.O. Box 790  
Corvallis, OR 97339

528 Cottage Street NE, Suite 1C  
Salem, OR 97301

421 High Street, Suite 110  
Oregon City, OR 97045