

May 1, 2025

Senator Fred Girod and Representative Rob Nosse
Co-Chairs, Joint Subcommittee on Capital Construction

Re: SB 5506: General obligation bonds for affordable housing production and preservation

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Nosse and Members of the Committee For the record, my name is Cree Bort, and I'm a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. I have the pleasure of serving as the Advocacy and Policy Organizer for the NAYA Action Fund, a Native-led organization that builds political power and advances advocacy for Native communities in Oregon and Washington. I am writing to share my support for SB 5506, which would provide investments into Oregon's LIFT programming.

We at Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) have significantly benefited from Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) funding, enabling us to develop culturally specific affordable housing and supportive services for Portland's Native American community. Additionally, NAYA has co-developed several projects in the Cully neighborhood, such as Nesika Illahee, Mamook Tokatee, and Hayu Tilixam. Beyond housing, LIFT funding has enabled NAYA to provide comprehensive services that support resident's transitions to stable living conditions.

SB 5506 would provide investments in the following areas:

- Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Affordable Rental Housing Program
- Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Homeownership Program
- Permanent Supportive Housing Program

Now is not the time to back down from our efforts towards creating more housing opportunities for Oregonians. Disinvesting would greatly impact communities across the state. Putting our vulnerable, low-income communities at even higher of a risk for becoming houseless. Which is why we urge the Capital Construction Subcommittee to allocate at least \$100 million in general obligation bonds through SB 5506 alongside the \$185 million in lottery bonds recommended by Governor Kotek. We ask this to ensure our Native community and Native-led organizations, like NAYA, continue to have the resources needed to build housing and community infrastructure that reflects, respects, and restores our Indigenous sovereignty and our wellbeing.

HB 5506's investments in new rental housing, new homes for homeownership, and new units of Permanent Supportive Housing are desperately needed. As we look out for our next seven generations to come, we urge you to continue to feed sources like these, like SB 5506.

Sincerely,

Cree Bort
Advocacy and Policy Organizer

