

May 8, 2025

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means – Subcommittee on Capital Construction

Re: Testimony in support of SB 5531 – Sections 8 and 14

Co-Chairs Girod and Nosse, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express Northwest Housing Alternatives' (NHA) strong support for key investments in SB 5531. NHA is a 40-year-old nonprofit, community-based housing organization with a portfolio of 2,600 affordable rental homes across Oregon. On behalf of the families, seniors, Veterans, and people living with disabilities who call NHA properties home, we urge your support for investing lottery bonds to preserve existing affordable homes across Oregon.

There is an enormous and rapidly growing need for funds to stabilize operations, repair, and preserve affordability at properties across Oregon. According to OHCS's preservation dashboard, there are at least 76 properties in Oregon with affordability restrictions that will expire in the next five years; and we know of hundreds more with physical needs that cannot be addressed through operating budgets only. Just within NHA's portfolio, we have about a dozen properties that face significant physical needs. Some of these properties – such as Saginaw Village in Hines and Ridgeway Village in Hermiston – represent a significant share of the total affordable housing in a community. Lottery bonds are the primary funding mechanism used to recapitalize properties and ensure ongoing affordability for low income Oregonians. We urge your continued support of this use of lottery bonds by dedicating at least \$185M for housing preservation and stabilization.

NHA is also pleased to see the Governor's strong commitment to housing production reflected in the allocation of \$100M in lottery bonds for community infrastructure projects that will result in affordable housing. In recent years, NHA has seen the scope and cost of public infrastructure included in our housing developments grow significantly. Jurisdictions both large and small do not have the resources needed to complete these improvements on their own, so the costs are often fully or partially placed on developers. The state can better support housing development by directly investing in public infrastructure and thus lessening the cost for individual projects.

Thank you for your dedication and thoughtful consideration of utilizing lottery bonds to support affordable housing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lydia M. Slocum".

Lydia Slocum, Senior Housing Developer