



May 8, 2025

Representatives Fred Girod and Rob Nosse  
Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Capital Construction  
900 Court St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for SB 5531

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Nosse and Members of the Committee:

I write on behalf of Home Forward to express our strong support for Senate Bill 5531. If adopted, this bill would provide critical bonding investments for both the preservation of existing affordable housing and the development of new housing, including:

- \$185M to preserve Oregon's existing affordable housing – including both rental housing and manufactured housing parks (Section 8 of the bill); and
- \$100M for the Housing Infrastructure Fund, which will support the development of new housing across the state (Section 14 of the bill).

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 homes throughout Multnomah County and fund rent assistance for thousands of households residing in private unregulated housing. We also administer critical emergency rent assistance programs such as Short-Term Rent Assistance, the Landlord Compensation Fund, and the Landlord Guarantee Fund, programs that support both tenants and landlords.

We strongly support the \$185M dedicated to affordable housing preservation. These investments are vital to stabilizing existing tenants, extending affordability, and protecting long-term housing assets through capital improvements and financial stabilization. At Home Forward, we know firsthand the tremendous impact of state allocated preservation funding to the long viability of our affordable communities and to the quality of life for our residents. For example,

- At the Gretchen Kafoury Commons in downtown Portland, Home Forward received approximately \$4 million in state preservation funding to enhance energy efficiency and the built environment for over 110 households through new doors and windows, upgraded elevator service, a new review, and unit upgrades.
- At Peter Paulson, a downtown single room occupancy (SRO) affordable community serving over 90 residents, a little over \$3 million in state preservation funds enabled us to install new windows, upgrade the common spaces, improve lighting, and enhance the overall livability of the building.

These are two of many examples. Without dedicated and robust preservation funding, these projects would not have been possible.

We also strongly support the \$100M Housing Infrastructure Fund, in line with Governor Kotek's proposal in HB 3031. This investment will unlock housing projects that are shovel-ready but stalled due to lacking municipal infrastructure, thereby accelerating much-needed housing production statewide.

We urge you to prioritize these two essential investments in SB 5531. Together, they will protect our existing supply of affordable homes and pave the way for new homes that Oregon families urgently need.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact Christina Dirks, Director of Policy and Planning at [christina.dirks@homeforward.org](mailto:christina.dirks@homeforward.org) (503) 348-1196 or regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Dirks', written over a thin horizontal line.

Christina Dirks  
Director of Policy and Planning  
Home Forward