



**Lower Umpqua
Hospital District**

600 Ranch Road
Reedsport, OR 97467

541-271-2171

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means

From: Lower Umpqua Hospital

Re: Support for HB 5531

Dear Chair Senator Lieber, Co-Chair Representative Sanchez, Co-Vice Chairs Girod, Gomberg and Smith,

For the record my name is John Chivers. I am the CEO for the Lower Umpqua Hospital in Reedsport, OR. I am here today to ask for your support for the Reedsport's Cross Creek Subdivision, in the amount of \$11,858,300. The project would provide funding to construct critical infrastructure for a new 59-unit subdivision and provide access to an additional 80 plus acres of buildable land.

Like many communities in the State of Oregon, the City of Reedsport lacks middle income housing. As one of the largest employers in the area, the hospital struggles to attract professional employees due to not having available, affordable homes in the city. A large number of our employees currently must commute over 30 minutes each way, to and from neighboring communities.

The City of Reedsport recently completed a buildable land inventory and housing needs analysis. What this study revealed is that while Reedsport's population is slowly growing it is also shrinking at the same time. According to the last census, approximately 12% of our homes are now 2nd homes leading to a lower percentage of occupancy. This has resulted in an extreme shortage of rental homes and driven up the cost of homes here in Reedsport.

The analysis also revealed that while it may appear that we have an inventory of buildable lands, the fact is that due to wetlands, steep slopes and liquefaction the added costs of the majority of our inventory make building either impossible or extremely expensive. I urge you to support HB5531.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

John Chivers, CEO
Lower Umpqua Hospital