



Testimony for SB 5531 – Hunter Creek Workforce Housing Project

Submitted by: Tamie Kaufman, Mayor, City of Gold Beach

Date: May 9, 2025

Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony in support of a \$1 million grant request for the **Hunter Creek Workforce Housing** project in Gold Beach.

Picture it — Gold Beach, 2025

As a leading employer in our close-knit community, you're excited to bring top-notch talent on board. After a long search, you finally find the perfect candidate — qualified, enthusiastic, and ready to relocate. You offer them the job, provide relocation assistance, and they say yes.

But then, just as the transition begins, a deal-breaking problem arises: they can't find a place to live. With no housing available, they're forced to turn down the position.

This story repeats itself year after year — in our school district, our health district, and in businesses.

We have to make it better, and as leaders, Gold Beach has solutions, will you partner with us?

Gold Beach is actively leading rural Oregon in tackling workforce housing challenges. Unlike many communities, we've embraced an inclusive, award-winning residential zoning code that allows for a wide variety of housing types. **We're not waiting—we are building solutions.**

With our ARPA funds, we've already invested in an **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) incentive program** and **purchased the land** specifically for this **Hunter Creek Workforce Housing Project**. The City has also paid for **Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental work**, and **engineering is underway, zoning change, minor partitions are completed** and paid by the city. But to bring

this development to life, **we need your help** funding essential infrastructure—**roads, water, sewer, and electricity**.

This project isn't traditional affordable housing. It targets those too often left out of housing programs: our **workforce**—health care professionals like nurses and radiology techs, administrative staff, service workers and local employees earning **80% to 200% of Area Median Income (AMI)**. Most state and federal housing tools don't reach this group. That's why this funding is so critical. Our average home price is around \$500,000. Our goal is to have these available in the \$300,000 to \$350,000 range.

We're planning to build **30 to 35 townhomes for purchase**, with **30-year deed restrictions** to maintain affordability for the next generation of workers. And we're not doing it alone.

We're proud to be working in **partnership with Curry Health District** that operates our local critical access care; and **ADAPT**, our regional mental health provider. Both organizations have **verbally committed to partnering on this project** because they see the urgent need to house their staff and serve the broader community.

This request is modest compared to similar projects across the state—but the impact will be high. It's a replicable model for other small communities facing similar workforce housing shortages.

We've already shown our commitment:

- An **affordable Veterans housing project** is under construction and will open this year.
- A **Housing Authority development** is in progress (land secured, design underway).
- A local nonprofit **rehabilitated two apartment buildings**, now providing stable rentals.
- Our **Urban Renewal District** completed a project offering transitional workforce housing for new employees.

We've done the hard work. We've invested local dollars, built local partnerships, and created real momentum. Now, we need your help to move this project across the finish line.

Please approve this funding request so we can keep delivering housing solutions for the people who keep our hospitals, schools, and businesses running.

Thank you for your time and your service to Oregon.

Sincerely,

Mayor Tamie Kaufman

City of Gold Beach
541-373-2888