



May 9, 2025

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for SB 5531 and Self Enhancement, Inc Garfield Affordable Housing Hub

Dear Co-Chairs Girod, Nosse, and members of the Committee,

Self Enhancement, Inc started as a basketball camp in 1981 for black youth in Portland's Albina neighborhood. Today, we're Oregon's largest black-led nonprofit with over 150 staff.

We do afterschool programming, parent support, financial literacy, rent assistance, and forty years later – affordable housing for tenants making 0-30 percent and 0-60 percent of area median income (AMI).

Our fundamental belief is that success is possible for EVERYONE.

Over the past five years, SEI codeveloped four sites in North and Northeast Portland for a combined 115 affordable housing units -- with 75 in construction in construction now.

I'm here today asking for the last \$10 million to fill our funding gap on the Garfield Avenue Housing and Business Hub.

With this funding, we can purchase two adjacent lots totaling 15,000 square feet, doubling our current site plan – so that when we start digging next year, we're breaking ground on 114 units, instead of the 49 units in our existing footprint.

This allocation is 13% of a \$78.5 Million project budget that includes 114 units of affordable housing, childcare space for 50 children and ground floor commercial space.

The match includes \$3.7 Million in land SEI bought for this project, \$27.8 million in Federal Investment Tax Credits, \$17.1 Million in Low Income Fast Track (LIFT) grants, \$10 Million in private loans, and \$4.6 Million from the City of Portland's Clean Energy Fund (PCEF).

We're in pre-development now, with strong support from our North Portland lawmakers, Senator Lew Frederick and Representative Travis Nelson.

Of this **one-time and scalable** \$10 Million investment, based on estimates we have today:



- \$4 Million would acquire the adjacent lots, totaling 15,000 square feet
- \$2.5 Million would expand the daycare from 30 to 50
- \$3.5 Million would develop the commercial retail.

We stand before you ready to address both Oregon's deep and troubling housing shortage – and to bring folks back who were priced out and want to come home. We just need a little help from the State of Oregon. Thank you for your consideration and your service to our state.

Sincerely,

Freda Walker
Chief Compliance Officer
Self Enhancement, Inc (SEI)