



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON
PORTLAND HOUSING BUREAU

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Representative Phil Barnhart, Chair
House Revenue Committee
900 Court Street NE, Hearing Room A
Salem, OR 97301

April 30, 2013

Dear Chair Barnhart and Members of the House Revenue Committee,

I ask for your support on HB 3112 A, which reflects the State of Oregon's long-term commitment to providing affordable housing for its residents. Current law is ambiguous on the question of whether real property owned by local governments, but rented to low-income tenants, is exempt from taxation. The City of Portland and Multnomah County both agree that current law should be clarified to provide an express exemption for such properties.

The City is committed to solving the unmet housing needs of the people of Portland. One of our major challenges is providing shelter for our most vulnerable citizens, people who earn less than 30 percent of the median family income. For a single person in Portland this means a monthly income below \$1,217, making it very difficult to secure a safe and affordable home. In addition to funding new developments, one of the City's most effective tools in serving this population is preserving existing affordable housing.

To implement its affordable housing policies, the City occasionally comes into ownership of rental properties in order to preserve the affordability of those properties. An example is the Fairfield Apartments in downtown Portland, which is almost exclusively occupied by Section 8 tenants.

The City of Portland and Multnomah County agree that property, like the Fairfield, that is owned by local governments, but used for affordable housing, should be exempt from taxation, just as similar rental properties owned by non-profits and housing authorities are. HB 3112 A would provide an express exemption.

I encourage you to support HB 3112 A, which is essential to local governments' ability to ensure that all Oregonians, regardless of income, have access to a high quality and affordable housing.

Respectfully,

Traci Manning
Director, Portland Housing Bureau

