



Member Organizations

211 Info

AFSCME Local #3135

Bienestar

CASA of Oregon

Central City Concern

City of Eugene

City of Gresham

City of Portland

City of Tigard

Clackamas County

Clackamas Housing Action Network

Coalition for a Livable Future

Community Action Partnership of Oregon

Community Action Team, Inc.

Community Alliance of Tenants

Community Housing Fund

Community Partners for Affordable Housing

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Enterprise Community Partners

Fair Housing Council of Oregon

Farmworker Housing Development Corp.

Habitat for Humanity of Oregon

Hacienda CDC

Homeless Families Coalition

Housing Advocacy Group of Washington Co.

Housing Development Center

Human Solutions

Impact Northwest

JOIN

Lane County Legal Aid and Advocacy Center

League of Women Voters of Oregon

Lincoln County

Metro

NAYA Family Center

Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.

Neighborhood Partnerships

NeighborWorks Umpqua

Network for Oregon Affordable Housing

Northwest Housing Alternatives

Northwest Pilot Project

Oregon Action

Oregon Food Bank

Oregon Housing Authorities

Oregon Opportunity Network

Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon

Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc.

Proud Ground

Raphael House

REACH CDC

Rose CDC

St. Vincent DePaul of Lane County

Shelter Care

Sisters Of The Road

Street Roots

Transition Projects, Inc.

Washington County

Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services

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SB 558

Foreclosure Avoidance Improvements Testimony to Senate General Government

Members of the Committee on General Government, Consumer and Small Business Protection

900 Court Street, NE, Room 453

Salem, OR 97301

Chair Shields, Vice-Chair George, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to you in support of Senate Bill 558, which improves Oregon's foreclosure mediation law and ensures that homeowners have access to a resolution conference with the lender prior to either judicial or non-judicial foreclosure proceedings.

The Housing Alliance is a coalition of organizations serving all parts of Oregon. We are concerned about the availability of safe, decent and affordable housing for all Oregon residents. While we are particularly focused as a coalition on advocacy on behalf of Oregonians who have limited incomes, we also know that there is a continuum of housing needs in our communities. Homeownership opportunities for households with modest incomes are an essential piece of the housing continuum. Homeownership still provides the best pathway to household financial resilience and to building a better future for families and communities.

The Housing Alliance supports SB 558 because foreclosure continues to threaten the foundations of our state and our communities. Thousands of Oregon homeowners are still at risk. The most recent numbers indicate that 1 out of 13 are a month or more behind on their mortgages, 132,000 are underwater and far too many Oregonians continue to struggle in communications with their lender.

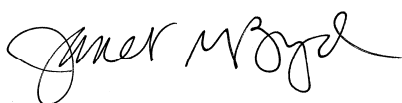
SB 558 draws on best practices to address this. State foreclosure mediation laws have a proven track record of increasing the number of mutually beneficial workouts for homeowners and lenders. This bill requires the largest lenders to participate in a resolution conference with homeowners prior to starting a judicial or non-judicial foreclosure to discuss mutually beneficial alternatives to foreclosure. The bill also contains enforcement authority, necessary because we have seen some lenders refuse to engage in the process to date.

A robust foreclosure resolution process is one of the best ways to speed up foreclosure timelines, avoid any potential backlog in the courts and create positive outcomes for both homeowners and for the investors who own the loans. SB 558 simplifies and streamlines the administrative requirements for banks and homeowners making the process more efficient and less costly.

SB 558 would build upon the hard work that has been done to create a strong network of foreclosure counselors and mediators in all Oregon communities. These counselors and mediators are poised to help homeowners understand their options and participate in finding mutually beneficial solutions.

Housing is the foundation of our communities. SB 558 helps our neighbors and families make the best possible decisions to ensure housing stability and helps ensure the best possible outcomes for all of Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony, and for your work on behalf of Oregon communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet M. Byrd". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Janet" being the most prominent.

Janet Byrd
On Behalf of the Housing Alliance