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House Bill 3007  
Legislative Committee  
Salem, Oregon

Dear Committee Members

I am the owner of a manufactured home in the Clackamas River Community Cooperative in Clackamas, Oregon, that was purchased by residents in October 2012. I urge you to support HB 3007 to ensure that other manufactured home owners have the same opportunity to purchase the land underneath their homes and achieve the long term financial security that we were given.

The opportunity for residents to purchase their community is rare in our state. Resident ownership has been successful around the country, but has not become widespread in Oregon because we often do not have a chance to make an offer for the community when it is for sale.

Having the ability to purchase the manufactured home community where I live was important to me for many reasons. Now that we own our community, we control the rental income and expenses for the community and we don't have to factor in a profit. Because of this, after the initial adjustment, we anticipate our rents will stay stable or reduce for a long period of time.

In addition, we no longer live in fear that our park will close. Our homes are our largest investment. In the past, the possibility of having to move them out of the park or potentially lose them would have been traumatic both financially and emotionally. Now that we own our community, we have peace of mind knowing that it will continue to operate as a manufactured housing community. No one will force us out for their profit. We feel comfortable investing in our homes and making improvements to the infrastructure knowing that we can't lose our homes to a park closure or redevelopment.

Before we purchased the park, we were concerned about the deteriorating infrastructure in my community and the long delays in making repairs. Trees endangering homes were not removed. Causes of creekside homes in danger of falling were not thoroughly addressed. Now that we own the community, as members of the cooperative we give priority to repairs and improvements.

We did not learn of the potential sale of our property until many months after it had been listed. Had CASA not come to our rescue, we were in danger of an “unknown” purchasing the property we live on. Perhaps that person would be an absentee landlord, as so many are, concerned only with making a profit and not for the residents whose homes sat on his property. It was frightening and we had very little time to prepare our due diligence and offer. The short time frame made the purchase quite hectic and took its toll on a number of interim board members.

Now that the Cooperative owns the park, we can be more hands on. The Board listens and is responsive. Committees have been formed to help with park rules, maintenance, membership, social and so on. When one of our Board Members was talking to an elderly senior citizen about the new Lease she would be signing with the Co-op, he learned that she had no money with which to buy food, and assisted her in signing up for food stamps and other assistance that will enable her to live a better, less stressful, life. Our committee members watch out for each other and help one another whenever we can. It is much more than a mobile home park now...it's a real community of friends and neighbors helping one another. Something we wouldn't have had if we were “just another park” to someone.

I urge you to support HB 3007 so that more residents of manufactured housing parks are given a realistic opportunity to purchase the community where they live.

Sincerely,

*Anita K Harrison*