



March 10, 2015

Via E-mail

Robyn Johnson, Administrator
House Committee on Human Services and Housing
robyn.johnson@state.or.us

RE: House Bill 3082 Supporting Family Housing Stability, House Committee on Human Services and Housing

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Urban League of Portland in support of House Bill 3082, for which the hearing date is March 11, 2015. This bill revises ORS 307.540-548 to enable local jurisdictions that exempts nonprofit housing from property taxes with a new option that allows families to remain in their affordable homes as their income stabilizes until their income reaches up to 80% of the area median income.

The Urban League of Portland is one of the leading organizations representing low income residents and communities of color in Oregon. We engage in affordable housing advocacy on behalf of our constituents and have been at the forefront of campaigns for housing equity in Oregon. We are committed to being an active supporter of House Bill 3082 in favor of housing stability for the low income residents and communities of color affected under the current statute that leaves open the risk of housing displacement.

The passing of House Bill 3082 is an important anti-displacement and stabilization tool. For example, a family of four living in Portland surviving on an income of under \$41,640 or less faces the risk of being forced to move from their affordable homes should their income slightly stabilize or begin to prosper. Under the current statute, a family income that rises even \$1 above the current 60% income threshold of the area median income would trigger a property tax reassessment and an exorbitant property tax bill that the low income family would be forced to pay along with their increased rent, or immediately leave their home. Raising the income threshold up to 80% of the area median income will allow a low income family to remain in their homes so that they may save for homeownership or transition to the private market. Passing House Bill 3082 will make a positive difference for healthy families and productive communities to become more successful members of the community.

The Urban League has been successfully serving low income residents and communities of color in Oregon for over 30 years. We strongly encourage the passing of House Bill 3082 because it supports the Urban League's interest in addressing housing displacement and is an important tool for changing public policies to help us achieve the goals of family stability and the attainment of self-sufficiency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Midge Purcell".

Midge Purcell
Director of Advocacy and Public Policy
Urban League of Portland