

May 5, 2015

Capital Construction Sub-Committee of Ways and Means
Oregon Housing and Community Services Bond Package

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Read, Members of the Committee:

My name is Ellen Meyi-Galloway of the City of Eugene, where I work in community development and affordable housing. I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the proposal to build Oregon's future by supporting a historic investment of \$100 million for affordable homes for families with low incomes.

We know that our communities can't succeed without homes. In Eugene, there are a large number of folks living on fixed incomes of Veteran's pensions, Social Security, or Disability who cannot afford one bedroom apartments and face homelessness. Homelessness is a serious concern here in Eugene. Stable housing has a significant positive effect on health and prosperity. Yet in Eugene, our neighbors who have full time jobs as bank tellers, retail clerks or home health aides cannot afford a two-bedroom apartment to support their families.

We can help solve this problem by building homes affordable to families with low incomes. In the process, we can strengthen Eugene's neighborhoods, and boost local economies. The proposed \$100 million housing development bond package will allow housing developers to be innovative, flexible and sensitive to our community needs. Statewide, the funds will build an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 new homes, which could affordably house 12,000 to 16,000 people. Those funds can be leveraged with local funds to create an even bigger impact. We look forward to seeing the impact we could have here in Eugene.

Here in Eugene we are envisioning how we would use the historic \$100 million investment in state bonds to purchase land that could be made available for development of new homes, and existing buildings that could be rehabilitated for the individuals, seniors, persons with disabilities and families who need them most. My vision is that everyone who needs a home can have access to one, to secure their safety, health and well-being!

My organization, and my community, like dozens of communities throughout the state, are ready to unleash the ingenuity, innovation and hard work that has defined Oregon for centuries. We can choose to invest in people and create a better future for the next generation. We urge your careful consideration of, and support for, this proposed historic investment in homes for Oregon. Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,
Ellen Meyi-Galloway