

Tammy Baney, Commissioner
1300 NW Wall Street Bend, OR 97701
(541) 388-6567 | tammyb@deschutes.org



May 8, 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:

I am writing to you today wearing a number of hats; I am beginning my 9th year as a Deschutes County Commissioner, I am a 5 year member of the State Housing Council and I am chair of our CCO. I am asking for your **support of the Housing Bond Package**. To say that we are experiencing a **housing crisis** in the State of Oregon would be an understatement. In Bend alone we have over 2000 homeless people, 50% of them are children and a *rental vacancy rate of .7%*. What this looks like in reality is 52 available rentals on the market as of this morning. Only 16 of those are priced to support a person working full-time at \$17.00; 6 are priced to support a person working full-time at minimum wage. Bend is the 6th fastest growing community in the nation yet again, with nearly 2450 new residents expected this year alone. This is one snapshot; with the Portland rental vacancy rate at 3% we cannot turn a blind eye to the housing crisis as a statewide issue.

The Bond Package that you are being asked to support will not solve this issue simply by itself. It will however give local governments, non-profit partners, and the private market a financial tool to get creative and get housing units on the ground. By partnering together we can target populations in our community, such as those struggling with mental health conditions, low income seniors, medically fragile, or those exiting the prison system, and *build housing coupled with services that meet their specific needs onsite*. It will not matter how much the Legislature spends on investments in our early childhood programs, education, foster care system, criminal justice system, economic development and healthcare reform if we do not

have a strong foundation of housing for our residents to live in. **Housing is fundamental to stabilization, period.**

As you know, Oregon Housing and Community Services have undergone significant organizational changes to better align with the needs of the state. As a member of the State Housing Council, our job is to set policy and align outcomes to achieve the goal of stabilization and success for the residents of Oregon. This funding will allow us, in partnership with the communities of Oregon to make a significant impact on those struggling most. This is a unique opportunity for our state; **we need your courageous vote** in order to get to work.

Thank you for your service and commitment to helping those most in need,

In service to our community-

Tammy

Tammy Baney
Deschutes County Commissioner

Direct: (541) 388-6567 | 1300 NW Wall Street, Suite 200 | Bend, OR 97701 |
tammyb@deschutes.org | www.deschutes.org