

Senate Committee On Human Services and Early Childhood, SB 1582, SB 1575

RE: Affordable Housing

Members of the Committee,

SB 1582 authorizes the state to be in competition with the private sector to create a low income districts. Besides the purchase of housing, it also provides for government assistance. The bill will cost an undisclosed amount of hundreds of thousands if not millions. The state should never use taxpayer funds to compete with the private sector.

The idea of communizing low income people in state housing is a page out of Agenda 21 (now 2030). Fifty-eight years after Brown v. Board of Education was decided, segregated schools – particularly those segregated by economic status – remain wholly unequal. Now we have our state government promoting economic segregation that will also filter down to the school. The New York Times reports that research shows middle-class schools are 22 times more likely to be high performing than high-poverty schools.

My second point is that this housing will be available to low income individuals or families that have incomes below 60 percent of the average income in that area. Oregon's average income from the 2013 US Census by county would mean if any of the minimum wage bills pass that only half the counties would have a qualifying low income population.

The biggest issue is the high price tag to taxpayers. In the areas that would qualify for this housing program there is a much greater need and that is jobs. Economic development that produces jobs would allow people to buy and rent private housing. The program conceals the states real problem and that is unsheltered homeless. At this point, who is the greater need for limited tax dollars? The low income with a bed, or the unemployed homeless on the streets?

Oregon made headlines for 2014-15 as one of three states that declared homeless to have reached a state of emergency in their cities. Oregon's homeless rose 8.7% in 2015, the third highest increase in homeless next only to New York and Hawaii. Further, Oregon has the 2nd highest unsheltered homeless rate at 55.9%, next only to California compared with Maine at 2.5%, and Massachusetts at 2.8%, the lowest rates.

We have major problems providing jobs to stop this increase. We have a major problem providing shelter for citizens. Shelters that can get them back into a productive life so they can afford private housing.

This isn't a metropolitan issue, it's a statewide issue. These facts fly in the face of a recovering economy.

2015 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, Nov 2015

<b>Category</b>	<b>% Unsheltered</b>	<b>Total homeless</b>	<b>Increase in 2014-15</b>	<b>Outside Metro (% unsheltered)</b>
<b>Overall</b>	55.9% - 2 <sup>nd</sup> highest	13,226 (7,395 unsheltered)	8.7% (1,786) – 3 <sup>RD</sup> highest	5,544 3 <sup>rd</sup> highest (59.6% 3 <sup>rd</sup> highest)
<b>Individuals</b>	57.2% - 4 <sup>th</sup> highest	9,461 (5,413 unsheltered)	18.4% (1,473) – highest %	3,320
<b>Families</b>	52.6% - highest	3,765 (1,982 unsheltered)		2,224 (63.6% highest)
<b>Youth</b>	66.8% - 5 <sup>th</sup> highest	1,350 (902 unsheltered)		751 highest (76.7% 3 <sup>rd</sup> highest)
<b>Veterans</b>	47.5% - 5 <sup>th</sup> highest	1,464 (695 unsheltered)	13.3% (172 3 <sup>rd</sup> highest)	448 4 <sup>th</sup> highest
<b>Chronically Homeless</b>			59.5% (1,314 highest)	1,189 highest

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2015-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

I encourage you to be prudent with taxpayer funds and reject both SB 1582 and SB 1575, and support HB 4064 that will help nonprofit organizations create affordable housing. Focus on helping the private sector create jobs for the unemployed, and provide shelters for the homeless.

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Salem, Oregon