



Community And Shelter Assistance Corporation

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**Senate Committee on Human Services and Early Childhood
February 1, 2016
Hearing on SB 1582**

Testimony from Peter Hainley, Executive Director
Community and Shelter Assistance Corp. (CASA of Oregon)

Chair Gelser and members of the Committee:

For 28 years, CASA of Oregon, a statewide non-profit organization, has been creating housing and economic opportunities for Oregonians. We focus our work in the rural parts of the state.

We support SB 1582, which directs the Housing and Community Services Department to develop and implement the LIFT (Local Innovation and Fast Track) Housing Program to expand the state's supply of affordable housing for low income individuals and families.

SB 1582 creates the "sideboards" by which funds will be allocated to affordable housing projects. This bill directs the newly formed Housing Stability Council to develop strategies by which to implement the program. While this bill spells out some of those strategies by which the Council should direct funding, we would hope that the Council will also consider the condition of existing "affordable" housing already in some of our communities. In many instances, the need for affordable housing may be less apparent because housing that is available (and on the surface appears affordable) may not meet basic health and/or safety codes.

As nonprofit housing developers, we work hard to leverage public and private dollars to create new housing that will remain affordable for decades. Currently, there are insufficient resources to address the huge demand for funding. The LIFT program will be an important source of funding to help alleviate some of that demand.

We will work with OHCS and the Housing Stability Council to ensure this new funding source creates safe, decent and affordable housing as quickly and effectively as possible. We urge the committee to pass SB 1582.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Hainley".

Peter Hainley
Executive Director