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February 1, 2016

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Chair ~~Brown~~ and Members of the Committee,

My name is Bob Brown, my address is 9238 SW 18<sup>th</sup> Pl, Portland 97219, and I am a leader with Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good (MACG), a broad-based organization of faith, labor, health, and community non-profits in the Portland Metro area. We are not a single-issue organization; we advocate for issues that matter to our members. During a listening session last spring, individual members of our institutions shared that lack of affordable housing is the top issue three times more than any other issue.

The lack of substantial investment in new affordable housing construction combined with the diminishing stock of currently affordable housing as rents rise and buildings are bought, renovated, or rebuilt is changing the heart of our cherished communities and endangering the most vulnerable of our neighbors. This is Martha's story. She was not able to come to Salem today to tell her own story. She can not afford to miss a day of work.

**"My name is Martha and I am a survivor of human trafficking and domestic violence. I have two babies: Natalia is 3 years old and Adam is 16 months old. I endured domestic violence for longer than I should have because I couldn't find a place to live that I could afford.**

**A friend lent me her garage and I was living there for a few months. After that I got help from Volunteers of America for survivors of domestic violence. The social worker found an apartment in a not very nice area, far away from my family and people who can give me emotional support. The Volunteers of America program ended in June.**

**I was able to get help from another organization called Catholic Charities, also for survivors of domestic violence. That program will also end soon, and I don't know how I will survive after that because I don't make enough money. Any place I find will require me to earn 3 times the rent, and with a part-time job cleaning houses I can't earn that amount.**

**Even with a full-time job I couldn't afford childcare.**

**I have been on the waiting list for one year for one of a few apartments for low-income people. I was told I would be on the waiting list for six months; it has now been a year and still nothing. For my children it will be a difficult transition; in the past year we have gone from living in a domestic violence situation to living in a garage to living in the apartment where we are now. All the change is bad for them.**

**I live with fear every day, not only because of the dangerous neighborhood but also because I don't know where I'll live with my children after the end of the rental program.**

**My situation is not unusual: to not be able to find affordable housing in a location where my support system is. We have a crisis. We need more affordable housing in the city.”**

Today we urge you to repeal the ban on Inclusionary Zoning. It is time to put control back in the hands of local, elected officials who can set policies for affordable housing that are consistent with the needs and vision of their own communities.