



February 24, 2016

Dear Co-Chairs Read and Girod and members of the Committee:

I write on behalf of Oregon Opportunity Network, the statewide association of nonprofit housing and community development nonprofits, in support of a \$17.5 million investment of lottery backed bonds to preserve currently affordable homes across Oregon; and in support of a \$10 million budget investment in the Emergency Housing Account and State Homeless Assistance Program (EHA/SHAP).

Working to provide housing and services in communities across Oregon, our member organizations (listed at the end of this letter) see people in crisis everyday—people living in cars and on the street, people one paycheck from homelessness, people working full-time but still struggling to pay the rent.

The lack of affordable housing has been a growing problem across Oregon, but in the past couple of years we've hit the perfect storm. With populations growing and the market not building new units during the Recession, vacancies are at all-time lows and rent increases are at all-time highs. Over 20,000 Oregon schoolchildren are experiencing homelessness.

We know that a stable, safe place to call home is the key to success. We know the policy and resource strategies that can put us back on track to meeting the housing needs of the most vulnerable Oregonians.

**Investing lottery-backed bonds in preserving currently affordable rental and manufactured homes, as well as investing in short-term assistance to end and prevent homelessness, are two key investments that will help keep vulnerable Oregonians stably housed.**

Oregon ON member organizations, along with many partners in communities across the state, are part of the public-private partnership of the Oregon Housing Preservation Project (OHPP), which has a track record of success helping families, seniors, and people with disabilities who are living on very low incomes stay in their homes and in their communities.

Many of our member organizations also serve as partners for the EHA/SHAP funding, helping get this desperately needed, flexible funding to families who need it the most.

We urge your support for these vital investments and ensuring our most vulnerable community members continue to have a safe, stable, affordable place to call home.

Thank you very much for your consideration, and your leadership for Oregon.

Sincerely,



Ruth Adkins  
Policy Director

### **Oregon ON member organizations:**

#### **Statewide**

CASA of Oregon  
Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare  
Catholic Charities  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon  
Housing Development Center  
NOAH (Network for Oregon Affordable Housing)  
Northwest Housing Alternatives  
Rural Community Assistance Corporation

#### **Central & Eastern Oregon**

Columbia Cascade Housing  
Community Connection of NE Oregon  
Housing Works  
NeighborImpact  
UGMW Nonprofit Development Corporation

#### **Coastal**

Northwest Coastal Housing  
Community Action Team, Inc.

#### **Southern Oregon**

ACCESS  
Housing Authority of Jackson County  
NeighborWorks Umpqua  
United Community Action Network

#### **Willamette Valley**

Community Home Builders  
Cornerstone Community Housing  
Farmworker Housing Development Corporation  
Housing and Community Services of Lane County (HACSA)  
Mainstream Housing, Inc.  
NEDCO  
Oregon Housing and Associated Services  
Polk CDC  
St Vincent de Paul of Lane County  
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services

#### **Portland Metro**

Bienestar  
BRIDGE Housing  
Central City Concern  
Community Housing Fund  
CPAH  
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East  
Hacienda CDC  
Home Forward  
Housing Authority of Clackamas County  
Housing Authority of Washington County  
Human Solutions, Inc.  
Innovative Housing, Inc.  
NAYA Family Center  
PCRI  
Portland Housing Center  
Proud Ground  
REACH Community Development  
ROSE Community Development  
Sabin CDC

...Plus over 100 businesses, government agencies, community organizations and individuals across Oregon who support our mission.