



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON

Charlie Hales, Mayor
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
Nick Fish, Commissioner
Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
Steve Novick, Commissioner

February 29, 2016

Representative Jennifer Williamson, Chair
House Rules Committee
900 Court St, NE, Hearing Room C
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Williamson and Members of the Committee:

We write in support of SB 1533-B. This legislation provides local communities with important tools to increase the supply of affordable housing in new multifamily developments.

The City of Portland and communities across our state are experiencing an unprecedented affordable housing crisis. Although homeownership opportunities are an important part of addressing affordable housing, the greatest need in the Portland area is affordable rental units for low and moderate income families. Roughly half of all households in Portland are renters. At the same time Portland is experiencing increases in rent that are the highest annual increases in the nation, and the average monthly rent for new rental housing is \$1,954, or \$23,448 per year.

Communities of Color have been especially hard hit by the housing crisis. The most recent Portland Housing Bureau data shows that the average family of color is effectively priced out of the current rental and for sale market in Portland. A lack of affordable homes and rental units means many families are unable to live in resource rich communities and are segregated to more distressed areas. These areas are often far from jobs, concentrating poverty and causing traffic congestion and high commuting costs.

SB 1533-B balances incentives for developers with affordability requirements – for both sale and rental units in new multifamily developments – along with market-rate housing. This approach allows communities to customize a housing policy to help ensure low and moderate income individuals and families can afford to live in their communities near their jobs, schools, and services.

SB 1533-B will enable local jurisdictions to work with developers and communities to find balanced approaches to providing affordable housing. We applaud the Legislature for taking up this important issue and we urge your support.

Sincerely,

Charlie Hales
Mayor

Amanda Fritz
Commissioner

Nick Fish
Commissioner

Dan Saltzman
Commissioner

Steve Novick
Commissioner