



Creating affordable housing and healthy communities

March 8, 2017

Dear Ms. Keny-Guyer and members of the Human Services and Housing Committee,

Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services enthusiastically **supports HB 2006** to invest in affordable homeownership. Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services is committed to improving lives and strengthening communities through quality affordable housing, homeownership, economic opportunity and community partnerships. We have developed 418 units of affordable multifamily rental and single family homes for sale to low income households.

In the past 15 years, WNHS' has helped over 1,150 households purchase their first home and have educated/ counseled over 3,800 families in Linn, Benton and Lincoln Counties. Homebuyer education and counseling helps reduce the likelihood of default and foreclosure by educating families about the home buying process, helps individuals determine homebuyer readiness, and assists with identifying safer and more affordable mortgage products. A study conducted by NeighborWorks America found clients who receive housing counseling are one-third less likely to become 90+ days delinquent in the two years since obtaining their loan (Mayer and Temkin, 2013).

Homeownership remains one of the few ways for low income families to build wealth over time. Please vote yes on HB2006 so organizations such as Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services can continue to help Oregonians reach their dream of sustainable homeownership.

Sincerely,



Brigetta Olson, Deputy Director

