



We build strength, stability, self-reliance and shelter.

March 7, 2017

To: House Committee on Human Services & Housing,

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chair Sanchez, Vice Chair Olson and Members of the Committee:

My name is Shannon Vilhauer, and I am the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon. I am writing to share our organization's enthusiastic support for HB 2570.

Today Habitat for Humanity affiliates are hard at work building and repairing homes in 30 communities across our state. **Together we have made the dream of stable and affordable homeownership a reality for 1,400 Oregon families.**

Habitat for Humanity helps families achieve stability by building and selling them a key asset: their home. Habitat homeowners pay down an average of \$50,000 in mortgage principal during the first 10 years of ownership, facilitating the very real intergenerational transfer of wealth. We have a proven track record of helping to close our state's minority homeownership gap. Over 10% of the households we serve have at least one member with a permanent disability. The average median income of Habitat homebuyers statewide is 39%. That's \$22,000 in annual earnings for a family of four. Thanks to Habitat's diligent homebuyer selection process and thorough financial education, our mortgage repayment rate exceeds 98%.

This fall, Habitat for Humanity of Oregon conducted a statewide homeowner impact study that highlights the educational benefits experienced by the children living in Habitat homes:

- 63% of the children we serve received better grades after moving into their Habitat home.
- 92% of the children raised in Habitat homes graduated from high school, exceeding Oregon's high school graduation rate by 17%.

The children of Habitat homeowners also experience improved health outcomes, receive higher adult earnings and are far more likely to become homeowners themselves.

Habitat for Humanity homeowners achieve the strength, stability and independence they need to build a better life for themselves and their families. Statewide, Habitat homeowners pay an

Habitat for Humanity of Oregon

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estimated \$1.32 million in property taxes each year, supporting local schools and infrastructure—and enhancing the communities we all share.

Habitat for Humanity is excited to support HB 2570 because this legislation will make it possible to rapidly develop homes across the state that are affordable to first-time homebuyers currently priced out of the market. The structure of this revolving loan fund is flexible enough to help numerous types of affordable homeownership developers. As the fund revolves, it will cycle forward to continually assist future homebuyer families.

With sufficient access to this fund, Oregon Habitat for Humanity affiliates will increase our collective homebuilding capacity by 100%. That will result in our serving 300 first-time homebuyer families per biennium, statewide.

Scaling up the production of new affordable homes for sale is a critical part of addressing the statewide housing crisis. Together, we can build new foundations for thousands of hardworking Oregonians and deliver stability to communities of all sizes.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of HB 2570 and for the important work that you do every day.

In partnership,



Shannon M. Vilhauer, Executive Director