



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 support for HB 2006.

Habitat for Humanity helps families to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by owning a key asset: their home. Habitat homebuyers pay an average of \$50,000 in mortgage principal during the first 10 years of ownership, facilitating the intergenerational transfer of wealth. Our program has a proven track record of helping to close Oregon's well-documented minority homeownership gap. The children of the families we serve do better in school, enjoy improved health outcomes and are far more likely to become homeowners themselves. The average median income of Habitat homebuyers statewide is 39%. That's \$22,000 in annual earnings for a family of four. We are proud to report that, as the result of our thorough homebuyer selection and training process, we enjoy a 98% mortgage repayment rate.

Habitat for Humanity's homeownership program impacts families' lives in profound ways, and our statewide impact is growing. Of the 30 Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Oregon, 22 build and repair homes in rural communities. Over the past five years, Habitat for Humanity has built and sold 394 homes—serving an average of 150 first-time homebuyers per biennium. The total number of Oregonians living in Habitat homes now outsizes the freshman class at the University of Oregon.

Through affordable home repairs, Habitat for Humanity improves the vibrancy of entire neighborhoods and preserves housing stock for generations to come. Our "Brush with Kindness" and "Critical Home Repair" programs took root in Oregon five years ago. Since then Habitat affiliates have provided over 600 affordable repairs, making it possible for homeowners of modest means to live in health and safety.

Even as we celebrate these successes, we are committed to doing more to address our state's housing crisis. Our communities become stronger as we unite to meet our friends' and neighbors' basic needs for a place to call home. Habitat for Humanity of Oregon

Habitat for Humanity of Oregon

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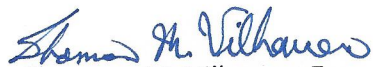
strongly supports HB 2006 because more resources are needed to expand the availability of our homeownership and repair programs.

Throughout the state, the number of qualified applicants coming to us for help has more than doubled since 2015. For nearly every Habitat for Humanity homebuyer purchasing their home today, their monthly mortgage payment is significantly less than the rent they previously paid. These families experience the opportunity to plant roots in their local neighborhood. Their children know which school they'll be attending from year to year. An investment in affordable homeownership is an investment in stable and successful families and communities.

Throughout the state, nonprofit housing providers are leveraging every resource available to serve more families. The strategic reinvestment of the savings generated from these common-sense changes to the Oregon mortgage interest deduction will provide the capitol we need to immediately scale up programs to serve more hardworking Oregon families.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of HB 2006 and for your service.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shannon M. Vilhauer". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Shannon M. Vilhauer, Executive Director