



March 20, 2017

Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer,
Chair of House Committee on Human Services and Housing
900 Court Street NE, Hearing Room
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Representative Keny-Guyer,

This letter is in strong support of HB 2964 would allow cities to authorize a 10-year tax exemption for low and moderate-income homebuyers of existing units as opposed to just newly constructed units. It would also allow cities to authorize a 10-year tax exemption for low-income property owners at risk of losing their homes.

Proud Ground is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating permanently affordable homeownership opportunities for working families primarily in the Portland Metro area and Lincoln County. As a key partner in delivering affordable homeownership services and supports to many low to moderate income Oregonians, this allowance would serve to allow many working families the ability to purchase a home at an affordable monthly mortgage including taxes.

We strongly support the City of Portland's effort to extend this exemption to existing units. Often times, using existing units is a more cost effective way to provide first-time homebuyers with the opportunity to purchase homes. Many of these homes are repaired and improved – a portion of the funds are required to be used for rehabilitation improving existing homes in distressed or fragile neighborhoods. Building new units is important and at the same time, leveraging existing houses is very effective in our efforts to serve the families in our program and the community. The homes we help families buy remain affordable in the area permanently.

Thank you for your consideration of this simple but important change to state statute.

Sincerely,

Diane Linn, Executive Director, Proud Ground

Dreams Start Here.

5288 N INTERSTATE AVE., PORTLAND, OREGON 97217, 503.493.0293, www.proudground.org