



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

March 21, 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 2912.

The Land Acquisition Revolving Loan Fund provides a key opportunity to affordable housing developers across the continuum—from emergency and rental housing through to homeownership—to increase capacity and plan for the future. Our Habitat for Humanity colleagues from Washington have used their comparable fund very effectively to acquire blighted property, then develop homes for sale that have increased the livability of local neighborhoods for all residents.

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 of Oregon

P.O. Box 11452, Portland, OR 97211 • tel(503)206-5248 • fax (503)206-7456 • [habitatoregon.org](http://habitatoregon.org)

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

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.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of HB 2912—and for the important work that you do every day.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shannon M. Vilhauer". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Shannon M. Vilhauer, Executive Director