



May 1, 2017

Dear Chair Gelser, Vice-Chair Olsen and members of the Human Services Committee:

I write on behalf of Oregon Opportunity Network (Oregon ON), the statewide association of affordable housing and community development nonprofits, in support of HB 3175. This bill is a technical fix which will adjust the homebuyer income level for LIFT housing bonds to enable use of the bonds for homeownership, while keeping the current income limits for rental housing.

We strongly believe that affordable homeownership is a crucial part of the solution to addressing our state's housing crisis. Along with our partners at the Housing Alliance, Oregon ON last year convened a statewide workgroup of affordable homeownership providers, including our nonprofit members who work in diverse communities using an array of homeownership programs and funding models. This stakeholder group collaboratively developed a comprehensive homeownership agenda, including HB 2570 (revolving loan fund for development), HB 3192 (downpayment assistance for families with low and moderate incomes) and HB 2961 (repair/rehab funding for low-income homeowners), and we are excited to support HB 3175 as well.

By legislative intent, the LIFT bond program was always meant to include both homeownership and rental housing. While Oregon Housing and Community Services limited the initial \$40 million investment to rental only, we have been working closely with the agency to support inclusion of homeownership in the next round of LIFT bond funding, thus expanding the impact of this new source of funding for affordable housing.

We are asking the Legislature to issue \$100 million in LIFT bonds and to set aside up to \$20 million of that amount for homeownership. Additional investment in affordable rental and homeownership development through the LIFT bond program, as enabled by HB 3175, will help more Oregon families, including communities of color and rural residents, achieve stability and prosperity. We urge your support of HB 3175, and we thank you as always, for your service to Oregon.

Sincerely,

Jerome Brooks
Executive Director

Oregon ON member organizations:

Statewide

CASA of Oregon
Cascadia Behavioral
Healthcare
Catholic Charities
Enterprise Community
Partners
Habitat for Humanity of
Oregon
Housing Development
Center
NOAH (Network for
Oregon Affordable
Housing)
Northwest Housing
Alternatives
Rural Community
Assistance Corporation

Central & Eastern Oregon

Columbia Cascade
Housing
Community Connection
of NE Oregon
Housing Works
NeighborImpact
UGMW Nonprofit
Development
Corporation

Coastal

Northwest Coastal
Housing
Community Action
Team, Inc.

Southern Oregon

ACCESS
Housing Authority of
Jackson County
NeighborWorks Umpqua

Willamette Valley

Catholic Community
Services Foundation
Community Home
Builders
Cornerstone Community
Housing
Farmworker Housing
Development
Corporation
Housing and Community
Services of Lane County
(HACSA)
Integrated Supports for
Living, Inc.
NEDCO
Polk CDC
St Vincent de Paul of
Lane County

Willamette
Neighborhood Housing
Services

Portland Metro

Bienestar
BRIDGE Housing
Central City Concern
Community Housing
Fund
CPAH
Habitat for Humanity
Portland/Metro East
Hacienda CDC
Home Forward
Housing Authority of
Clackamas County
Housing Authority of
Washington County
Human Solutions, Inc.
Innovative Housing, Inc.
NAYA Family Center
PCRI
Portland Housing Center
Proud Ground
REACH Community
Development
ROSE Community
Development
Sabin CDC

...Plus over 100 businesses, government agencies, community organizations and individuals across Oregon who support our mission.