



# Oregon

Governor Kate Brown

## Housing and Community Services

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May 12, 2017

Senator Fred Girod  
Representative Paul Holvey  
Co-Chairs, Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction  
900 Court St. NE, HR F  
Salem, OR 97301

### Re: SB 5505 – Support for Local Innovation and Fast Track Housing (LIFT)

Dear Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Subcommittee:

I write to urge your support for Governor Brown's proposed \$60 million investment in the Local Innovation Fast Track (LIFT) Housing Program. As you know, the 2015 Legislature committed \$40 million of general obligation Article XI-Q bonds to fund the LIFT program. This new use of funding has allowed OHCS and its partners to increase Oregon's supply of affordable housing, particularly for low-income families in historically underserved communities.

In January 2017, OHCS issued the first set of LIFT awards to fund 12 projects providing nearly 1,000 Oregon families with a place to call home. LIFT reached historically hard to develop areas like La Pine, Ontario, and Yachats. These communities have been working hard to create affordable housing, and without LIFT, it would not have happened.

Following these historic awards, OHCS is working closely with LIFT recipients and stakeholders to ensure successful implementation for these projects and inform best practices for future investment of this important resource.

There is more we can do to make sure the families in our communities can afford safe, stable places to call home. Historically low vacancy rates and rapidly rising rents are putting housing out of reach for too many Oregonians. One in four renters in Oregon is considered extremely low-income, but for every 100 extremely low income renters, there are just 26 units affordable and available to them. We need more affordable homes. LIFT is an example of how community partners can contribute diverse resources and expertise to leverage critical State investment to develop more affordable housing for the families who need it the most.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge your support for \$60 million in LIFT funding to provide homes for Oregonians across the state.

Sincerely,

Margaret Solle Salazar  
Director, Oregon Housing and Community Services

