



# HOUSING ALLIANCE

June 13, 2017

Joint Committee on Tax Reform  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2830

Co-Chair Hass, Co-Chair Barnhart, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to identify several critical investments in housing opportunity needed to address our state's housing crisis.

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a coalition of more than eighty organizations from all parts of the state. Our members have come together with the knowledge that housing opportunity is the foundation on which all of our success is built – individual success as students, parents, workers, and community members as well as the success of our communities. We represent a diverse set of voices from including residents, local jurisdictions, non-profit housing developers, and organizations working to meet basic needs in every corner of our state.

We believe that all Oregonians need a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Today, we don't have enough affordable homes for people who need them, and vacancy rates have dropped precipitously towards zero across Oregon. People are struggling with homelessness, housing instability, rent burdens, and to make ends meet and put food on the table.

The Oregon Housing Alliance has identified several priorities for additional investment:

- The Emergency Housing Account and the State Homeless Assistance Program, also known as EHA and SHAP, which provide needed support to prevent and end homelessness across Oregon. In 2016, the Legislature invested an additional \$10 million into these programs. Those dollars have been critical at helping to meet basic needs for shelter across Oregon. We are requesting that the Oregon Legislature make an investment of \$50 million this biennium to prevent and end homelessness.
- The Local Innovation and Fast Track Housing Development Program (LIFT). This innovative and exciting new housing development program will build over 950 units across Oregon with the initial investment of \$40 million provided by the Oregon Legislature in 2015. The Governor's Budget proposes \$60 million, and we are requesting an investment of \$100 million in General Obligation bonds to provide an infusion of badly needed supply of safe and stable homes across Oregon.
- The critical work to preserve our existing affordable housing across Oregon continues. In times when we have extreme shortages of affordable housing, it is important to both increase the supply of the affordable homes we have, and to ensure we keep every affordable home we have today. We cannot afford to lose this precious resource. The

Governor's budget contemplates an investment of \$10 million in lottery bonds for this effort. Based on projections of need across the state to preserve housing with federal rent subsidies, public housing, and manufactured home parks, we are requesting that the Legislature consider an investment of \$100 million.

- The Oregon Foreclosure Avoidance program. Since 2012, the Legislature has provided a small amount of funding to sustain access to counseling and legal assistance for people facing foreclosure. We know that access to counseling prior to mediation creates an extremely successful formula. For people that do access counseling prior to mediation, they are able to enter into mediation with their lenders extremely well prepared and over 70 percent of them come to some agreement with their lender to keep their home.

In addition, the Housing Alliance is also supporting a range of housing opportunity bills, including a fund to help tenants with issues in their rental history to access housing, a land acquisition program to support the development of affordable housing, a revolving loan fund to develop more affordable homeownership units, down payment assistance to create new homeowners, and funds for the repair and rehabilitation of existing homes.

Investing in preventing and ending homelessness, new affordable homes, and our existing affordable housing infrastructure is critical at this time when far too many Oregon families are experiencing housing instability. We have a strong network of service providers, affordable housing developers and public housing authorities across Oregon. With these additional investments, we could build more affordable homes for the Oregonians who need them.

Fully meeting Oregon's urgent housing needs requires new revenue. This revenue is an investment in the future of our state. As the housing crisis escalates, we must demonstrate our commitment to meeting our state's housing needs by raising the revenue needed to build a strong affordable housing infrastructure for Oregonians. Families are falling further behind, and we must take action now to ensure every Oregonian has a decent home they can afford.

These investments in the basics – a safe, stable, affordable home for Oregonians with low incomes – have positive ripple effects across our state. We know what home, and what stable housing, means to all of us. When people have safe and stable housing, it has important and significant benefits. Kids are stable in school and able to focus on the things that matter – being kids, doing their homework – and not worrying about where their families will sleep at night. Parents are able to focus on work and taking care of kids. Everyone's stress decreases and health improves. Safe and stable housing that people can afford is key to accessing opportunity.

We thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,



Alison McIntosh  
On Behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance

## Housing Alliance Members

1000 Friends of Oregon  
211info  
A Community Together (Lane County)  
Aging in the Gorge  
Benton County Health Department  
Benton Habitat for Humanity  
Bienestar  
Bradley Angle  
CASA of Oregon  
Central City Concern  
Church Women United of Lane County  
City of Beaverton  
City of Eugene  
City of Hillsboro  
City of Portland  
City of Tigard  
Clackamas County  
Coalition of Community Health Clinics  
Coalition of Housing Advocates  
Common Ground OR-WA  
Community Action Partnership of Oregon  
Community Alliance of Tenants  
Community Energy Project  
Community Housing Fund  
Community Partners for Affordable Housing  
Community Vision  
Cornerstone Community Housing  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Evolve Property Management  
Fair Housing Council of Oregon  
Farmworker Housing Development Corp.  
FOOD for Lane County  
Habitat for Humanity of Lincoln County  
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon  
Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East  
Hacienda CDC  
Housing Authority of Clackamas County  
Housing Development Center  
Human Solutions  
Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization  
Impact Northwest

Lane County Health and Human Services  
League of Women Voters of Oregon  
Lincoln County  
Mainstream Housing Inc.  
Metro  
Momentum Alliance  
NAYA Family Center  
Neighborhood Economic Development Corp.  
Neighborhood Partnerships  
NeighborImpact  
NeighborWorks Umpqua  
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing  
Nightingale Public Advocacy Project  
Northwest Housing Alternatives  
Northwest Pilot Project  
Oregon AFSCME Council 75  
Oregon Center for Christian Voices  
Oregon Center for Public Policy  
Oregon Coalition on Housing & Homelessness  
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Oregon Food Bank  
Oregon Housing Authorities  
Oregon Law Center  
Oregon Opportunity Network  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives  
Portland Tenants United  
Proud Ground  
Raphael House  
REACH CDC  
St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County, Inc.  
ShelterCare  
Sisters Habitat for Humanity  
Sponsors, Inc.  
SquareOne Villages  
Street Roots  
Transition Projects  
Urban League of Portland  
Washington County  
Welcome Home Coalition  
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services

JOIN

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